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ABSTRACT

This Teacher's Guide contains procedures to be followed throughout the year in implementing the New Mexico Portfolio Writing Assessment. The Assessment, required for all students in grades 4 and 6, and optional for grade 8, is conducted each school year, with a call for each student's best piece in March. The optional administration in grade 8 allows for practice and development before the New Mexico High School Competency Examination of grade 10. These guidelines assure standardization of practices and scoring, and cover all aspects of the portfolio process from its introduction to the students and the distribution of materials through holistic scoring and interpretation of results. Scoring guides are presented for narrative, expository, persuasive, and analytic writing. Each scoring guide contains samples of student writing at proficiency levels 1 through 6. The required prompts (topics for student writing) for the 1992-93 school year are included in an addendum. (Contains 24 references.) (SLD)

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New Mexico Portfolio Writing Assessment

Teacher's Guide Grade 8

New Mexico State Department of Education
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Please Read This Entire Guide Carefully

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New Mexico
Portfolio Writing Assessment

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THE NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

The New Mexico Portfolio Writing Assessment, grades four and six (optional for grade eight), is conducted each school year, with a call for "best piece" in March. The prompt addressing the type of writing to be assessed at each grade level will be announced when a call for papers is issued. All students in grades four and six will participate. Unless otherwise noted in their IEPs, all Special Education students in grades four and six will participate. Students who have been assessed as Limited English Proficient are exempt from submitting a piece for scoring in the spring.

INTRODUCTION

This Teachers Guide provides instructions regarding procedures to be followed throughout the school year. In order to ensure standardization, each teacher who is charged with the responsibility of conducting the assessment should adhere to the guidelines presented herein. The process and the assessment should be conducted in a classroom setting; students should not take the work home.

PLEASE READ THIS ENTIRE GUIDE CAREFULLY BEFORE WORKING WITH THE PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT MATERIALS. You should become familiar with the directions provided in this guide. Your comfort with the assessment situation will reduce student anxiety and enable smooth administration. If at any time you need assistance, materials, or information, contact your District Test Coordinator.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Education Reform Act of 1986 moved the State into the assessment of student writing. Until 1991-92, New Mexico schools were utilizing the Direct Writing Assessment in grades four and six. Interest in portfolio assessment and a national trend toward assessments that are also instructional led the Statewide Student Assessment Task Force to consider using portfolios to assess student writing. Thus, several consultants in the State Department of Education researched portfolio assessments and agreed with the task force that assessments could be provided that can be described as the performance of learning. With assistance and consultation from many entities, the Portfolio Writing Assessment was utilized in classrooms for the first time in 1991-92.

In addition, it was decided to offer this assessment as an option to grade eight students for those districts who wish to participate. This allows for more practice and development as well as an additional checkpoint before the New Mexico High School Competency Examination written composition is administered in grade ten.

Research has demonstrated that students who use portfolios develop more competent writing skills than students who do not use portfolios. Each student's portfolio becomes a record of achievements over time. The student uses higher level thinking skills of synthesis and evaluation as decisions are made regarding what pieces to save as the year progresses. Using the portfolio process, learning takes place in a more natural way as the student is encouraged to reflect on his/her work while making responsible choices regarding work to be saved.

MATERIALS LIST FOR PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

Each teacher who has the responsibility for conducting the Portfolio Writing Assessment will be provided with the following materials:

1. **Teachers Guide**
   This guide contains information on the process and the assessment and annotated range finder papers for the types of discourse required of the grade level being assessed. Also, within the guide are the rubrics for scoring the students' writing both holistically and analytically. A bibliography is also provided for the teacher's use.

2. **A portfolio envelope**, one per student
   This envelope is intended as a special storage space for the student's writing. It is printed with a writing checklist and a description of the four different discourses applied in grades four through eight. This checklist and the descriptions are reproduced for your use on page 8 of this guide.

3. **A final composition booklet** for each student
   The final draft of "best piece" for the prompt identified by the State Department in the spring to be submitted for scoring will be transcribed onto this booklet. The booklets will be sent to your district when a call for papers is issued in March. Each booklet will contain the required prompt which will be one of the prompts your students have been working on throughout the year. There will be a biographical data page and four lined pages for the student's composition. The student's writing for the required prompt should be limited to four pages. If additional pages are used, the cost of scoring will be higher. A request to add more pages or to submit a computer generated response must first go through your district's office and then be forwarded to the State Department. The State Department will review the request and determine whether or not to grant it.

PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN DISTRIBUTING PORTFOLIOS TO STUDENTS

1. Provide each student with a portfolio.
2. Have each student write his/her name in the designated space.
3. Discuss how artists use portfolios to demonstrate good work.
4. Explain the use of this portfolio.
5. Review the writing process which will be used with this portfolio.
6. Review the writing checklist printed on the student's portfolio and how it can be used most effectively during this process. (A copy of this checklist is printed on page 6 of this guide.)
7. Explain what holistic scoring means. (Review the rubrics provided in this guide, pages 8, 50, and 80.)
8. Explain what analytic scores mean. (Review the rubric provided in this guide, page 122.)
9. Discuss the types of discourse to be addressed at the grade level you are teaching (see page 6--grades four and six: expository, narrative, and descriptive; grade eight: expository, narrative and persuasive).
10. As you work throughout the year, use the practice prompts first, the ones for which range finder papers are provided within this guide. You may want to review the section on page 4 entitled ***Student as Performer/Teacher as Coach***.
11. When you and the students are comfortable with this process, you will want to move on to the required prompts, one of which will be announced in March for transcribing student work onto the final composition booklet.
12. Additional portfolios may be obtained from your test coordinator.

13. Depending upon the time of arrival of a new student, he/she may not have time to complete all required prompts. When the prompt for which a best piece must be transcribed is announced in March, the teacher may feel the new student did not have sufficient time for completion; therefore, that student paper might not be submitted for scoring. The teacher will desire a score for each student if at all possible. The State Department should be contacted for further clarification.

WORKING WITH THE PRACTICE PROMPTS--RANGE FINDER PAPERS PROVIDED

The bulk of this guide contains three practice prompts, one for each of the discourses to be addressed at your grade level. For each practice prompt, holistic rubrics are provided along with papers which have been scored and annotated to demonstrate all of the six holistic score points possible. In addition, the analytic rubric is provided along with papers that have been scored and annotated to demonstrate all three score points for each of the four analytic categories.

1. During writing instruction time introduce practice prompts and have students write toward those topics.
2. Share range finder papers at this time.
3. Share scoring rubrics at this time by giving each student a copy.
4. Review why each paper was given a particular score.
5. Students can use the rubric to understand how to improve their piece of writing.
6. Students may work in groups to share similar concerns.
7. The writing process of revising should be used at this time.
8. Small or large group writing lessons can be incorporated as defined by certain needs derived from class papers and discussion.
9. Use these prompts for practice in understanding the process as much as you feel necessary.
10. Students should feel successful with these prompts before they work with the required prompts.
11. The timeline for this process should be decided by you and your students.

PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN WORKING WITH THE REQUIRED PROMPTS

1. The required prompts will be provided to you each year. If you have not received the prompts designated for the current school year, call your test coordinator to obtain a copy.
2. These prompts address the different discourses required at your grade level.
3. Your students are required to write at least one paper for each of the required prompts and should be encouraged to write as many papers as necessary to produce a good piece.
4. Drafts of these prompts should be stored in the students' portfolios.
5. In March a call for "best piece" will be issued for only one of these required prompts.
6. The student and teacher should conference about which piece demonstrates the student's best effort in the called for discourse.
7. The student will then transcribe the "best piece" for the requested prompt into the final composition booklet.
8. The final composition booklet will have four lined pages for this purpose and will be provided when the call for "best piece" is announced.
9. The student should limit his/her writing to no more than four pages.
10. Your test coordinator will disseminate directions for transcribing along with the booklets in March.

As the teacher introduces each of the required prompts, it is suggested that lessons about the particular discourse, planning, revising, proofreading and editing be delivered throughout this period of time. The work with the required prompts should be the student's own writing and should be performed in the classroom.

As the student works with the prompts, he/she may use references such as the dictionary or thesaurus. The teacher's role in this process should be one of "coach." Sound instructional practices are the order of the day in this process. The teacher should be a coach and resource for the student throughout this process.

THE WRITING PROCESS

The purpose of writing is to convert a student's thoughts into a coherent written message understandable by others. The writing process is broken down into four manageable steps to help assure a student's success.

STEP I: PRE-WRITING is any experience, activity, or exercise that motivates a student to write.

STEP II: DRAFTING is the process of synthesizing language experiences, notes, thoughts, and ideas that occur during the pre-writing phase and developing an organized piece of writing.

STEP III: REVISING/EDITING includes all phases of correction and change improvement after collaboration with others on content. Rethinking, reorganizing, and revising ideas, as needed, ready the writing for sharing and/or publication.

STEP IV: PUBLISHING is the culmination of the writing process when the final copy is shared with the audience. The decision as to whether the writing will be displayed, reproduced, or given orally or physically to someone, involves both the author and the teacher.

STUDENT AS PERFORMER/TEACHER AS COACH

Within the student as performer/teacher as coach model, student and teacher work as a team toward mastery of a set of tasks leading toward an outcome. This outcome is then demonstrated by the student. The student must be responsible for an agreed-upon task. After completion of that task, the student demonstrates self-regulation, self-discipline and self-initiative in order to complete a written discourse to the satisfaction of both self and teacher.

In his article, ***Student-As-Worker: Toward Engaging and Effective Curricula,*** Grant Wiggins talks about student-as-worker being able to answer the following questions when working on a designated piece of writing:

1. What is my task?
2. What is its purpose?
3. What do I need to do next?
4. What resources are available?
5. What know-how and knowledge are required to do it well?
6. How will my work be judged?
7. How will I know when my work is adequate?
8. How should I allot my time?
9. What is my goal in this work?
10. Where is my performance strongest and weakest?
11. What can I do to improve?

The student and teacher work through these questions as the written piece unfolds; the teacher acting as prodding coach, and the student as worker. The final completion of the designated piece rests with the student's feeling that he/she has completed a piece of discourse to his/her satisfaction.

WHAT IS A RUBRIC?

A rubric is a set of criteria from which one can take direction. The New Mexico Portfolio Writing Assessment rubric is a six point scale using the following discourses: expository, narrative, descriptive, and persuasive. Each student should progress through this rubric as his/her writing improves. The assessment becomes an instructional and learning tool with the scoring rubrics applied to the student's writing throughout the process.

WHAT IS HOLISTIC SCORING?

A holistic score is an overall picture of how the student is able to convey meaning in his/her writing. Does the writing have a beginning, middle and end? Does the writing flow to the designated prompt? Is the author involved in the writing? With a broad stroke has the author conveyed meaning?

USING THE PORTFOLIO BEYOND THIS SCHOOL YEAR

In the spring of each school year, the holistic and analytic scores will be returned to the school districts. These scores should become a part of the student's permanent record. Labels are issued to adhere to the student's transcript. There will also be a copy of the report that can be shared with the student and parents.

The "best piece" for each of the required prompts should remain in the student's portfolio, along with any other materials that the student and teacher have agreed upon. The portfolio and its contents are to be passed on to the student's teacher in the fall of the next school year. Each school and district should develop a plan to ensure that this is possible. The "off grade" teachers (i.e., grades five, seven, and nine) may work with the contents of the student's portfolio and issue additional writing assignments which may be kept and passed along with the student from year to year. A process for "weeding out" materials can also be established at the district level. By the time a fourth grade student reaches tenth grade, the high school teacher will have a portfolio of work which portrays strengths, weaknesses, successes, progress and a writer's "voice." These portfolios can be used to assist in the preparation for the tenth grade High School Competency Examination written composition.

INTERPRETING THE RESULTS

When score reports are returned to the districts, each student will receive a holistic score from a range of 1 through 6 and analytic scores from a range of 1 through 3. If a student's paper is not scorable, a reason will be given. Possible reasons for not scoring a paper include: blank paper, off topic, illegible, written in a language other than English, and insufficient response. The scores should be compared to the rubrics published in this guide in order to determine a student's strengths and weaknesses and to provide suggestions for improvement.

The individual school reports should help staff make decisions about the school's writing program. District results should inform the curriculum revision process in writing and, perhaps, in language arts.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

The Language Arts Specialist at the State Department of Education has developed a supplemental packet of material which teachers may find helpful as they work with the portfolio writing process. You may request a packet from your district test coordinator. This supplemental packet contains ideas for planning, organizing, drafting, revising, proofreading and publishing. Ideas for encouraging writing across the curriculum are included in this material. You may reproduce this packet of materials for other teachers in your building. There are ideas that may prove helpful to teachers at any grade level. You are not required to use the supplemental material.

DESCRIPTION OF EACH MODE OF DISCOURSE

Expository--This piece of writing demonstrates the student's ability to explain something in detail, such as "how to" do something, or to explain a position taken based on reasons.

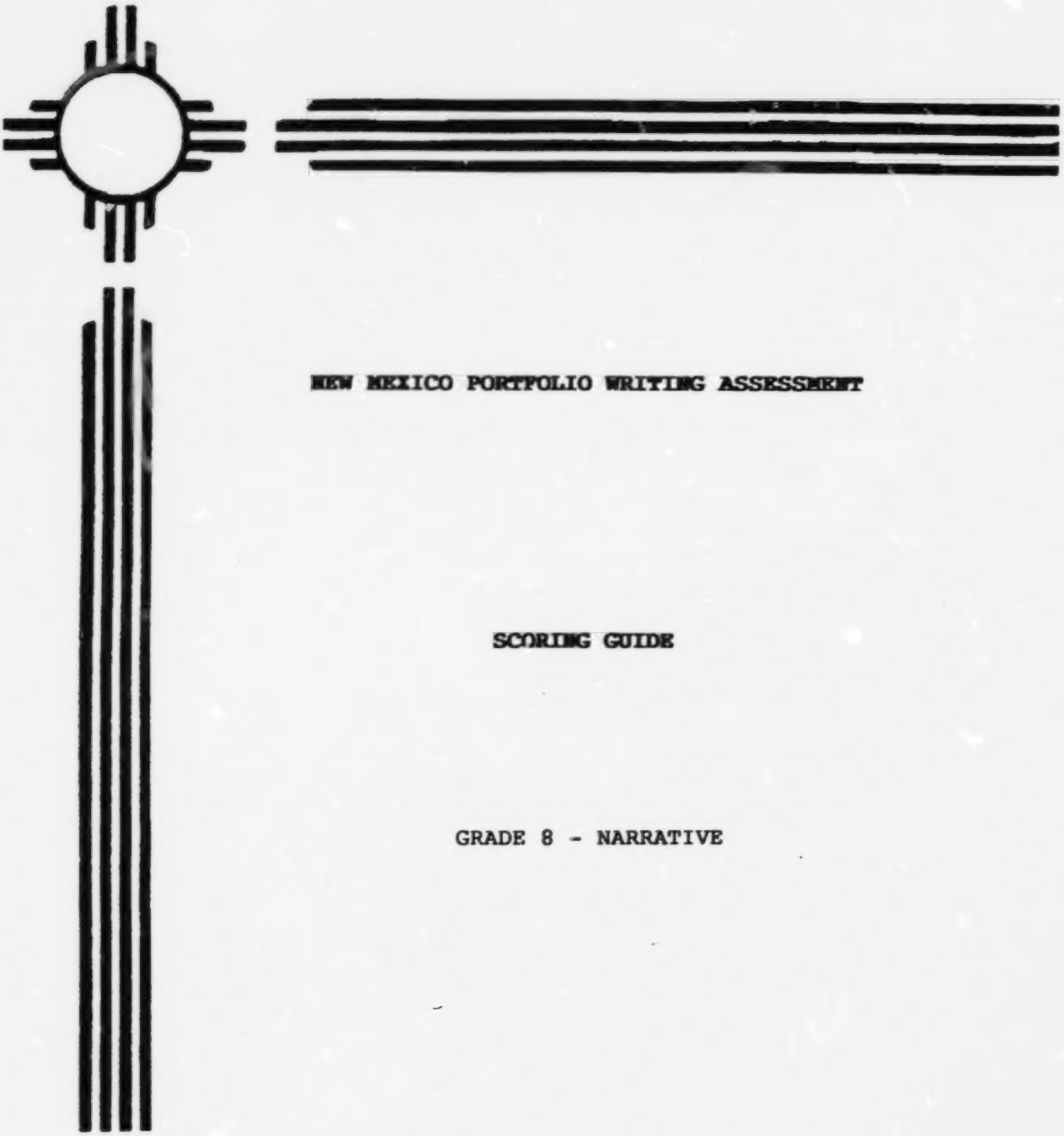
Narrative--This piece of writing demonstrates that the student has a command of a story plot and can develop characters in a meaningful way.

Descriptive--This piece of writing demonstrates that the student has a command of location, size, color and style, and can include sensory images in description.

Persuasive--This piece of writing has a strong opening statement, followed by opinionative argument appealing to one's emotions, and a strong conclusion derived from the opening statement.

STUDENT WRITING CHECKLIST

1. I have used a plan for my composition.
2. I have written a rough draft of my composition.
3. I have written this composition to be read by:_____.
4. I have written a good topic sentence for each paragraph that I wrote.
5. I have written ideas and details about the topic sentence.
6. I have written a clear ending for my composition.
7. I have written complete sentences.
8. I have used correct grammar.
9. I have used correct capitalization and punctuation.
10. I have checked my spelling.
11. I have used good handwriting.
12. I have used this checklist to revise my rough draft.
13. I have written and proofread my final draft.



NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

SCORING GUIDE

GRADE 8 - NARRATIVE

NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT · NARRATIVE SCORING RUBRIC

STRONG COMMAND OF NARRATION	GENERALLY STRONG COMMAND OF NARRATION	COMMAND OF NARRATION	UNDERSTANDING OF NARRATION	SOME SENSE OF NARRATION	LITTLE OR NO EVIDENCE OF NARRATION
SCORE POINT 6	**SCORE POINT 5**	**SCORE POINT 4**	**SCORE POINT 3**	**SCORE POINT 2**	**SCORE POINT 1**
Has an effective opening and closing that ties the piece together	Has an opening and a closing	Generally has an opening and closing	May not have an opening and/or closing	May not have an opening and/or closing	May not have an opening and/or closing
Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and usually has a single focus; some responses may drift from the focus	Some responses relate to the topic but drift or abruptly shift focus	May state a subject or a list of subjects; may have an uncertain focus that must be inferred
Well-developed, complete response that is organized and progresses logically; writer takes compositional risks resulting in highly effective, vivid responses	Key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details; some risks may be taken and are mostly successful; may be flawed, but has sense of completeness and unity	Development may be uneven with elaborated ideas interspersed with bare, unelaborated details	Some responses are sparse with clear, specific details but little elaboration; others are longer but ramble and repeat ideas	Details are a mixture of general and specific with little, if any, elaboration, producing a list-like highlight response	Details are general, may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent
	Organized and progresses logically, but there may be a lapse	Some responses are organized with little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea; other responses may ramble somewhat with clusters of ideas that may be loosely connected, but an overall progression is apparent	Some responses have elaborated details but are interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by lack of transitions	Attempt at organization; some attempt to control details but few, if any, transitions	Some lengthier papers are disorganized and difficult to follow; may show no sense of planning
Very few, if any, errors in usage	Few errors in usage	Some errors in usage, no consistent pattern	May display a pattern of errors in usage	May display numerous errors in usage	May have severe problems with usage including tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, word choice
Variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes demonstrates syntactic and verbal sophistication; very few, if any, errors in sentence construction	Syntactic and verbal sophistication through a variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes	May demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax; avoids excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may contain a few errors in sentence construction	May demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may display errors in sentence construction	Excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may contain numerous errors in sentence construction	May contain an assortment of grammatically incorrect sentences, may be incoherent or unintelligible
Very few, if any, errors in mechanics	Few errors in mechanics	May display some errors in mechanics but no consistent pattern	May display a pattern of errors in mechanics NOTE: Errors may interfere with readability	May display numerous serious errors in mechanics NOTE: Errors may interfere somewhat with comprehension	May display severe errors in mechanics. NOTE: Errors may interfere with comprehension

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

This is the prompt 8th Grade students used when writing the following papers. It may be used for practice with your students.

> Pretend that something you wished for really came true. It might be a special trip or a gift or anything else that you have wanted. Write a story about your wish coming true.

1 = The response indicates little or no evidence of narration.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. These papers are on topic and demonstrate at least a minimal attempt to respond to the topic by stating a subject or giving a list of subjects. Details are vague and/or general. They may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent. Some of the lengthier papers are disorganized, making them consistently difficult to follow. Others will relate to the topic but will have an uncertain focus. In these papers the reader has to infer what the focus is. The overriding characteristic of many of these papers is a lack of control with no sense of planning.

- may have severe problems with usage. This includes problems in tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, and word choice.

- may demonstrate an assortment of grammatically incorrect sentences. Some statements may be either incoherent or unintelligible.

- may display severe errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere with comprehension.

"My Specil Wish"

I wish that I had my driver licence. That way I could have me a truck. Also I won't have to ride the boring bus. Besides I will have to get a job to pay for the truck.

Getting a job would realy help me pay for the truck. People would be glad becase they don't have to give me a ride some ware. Then people would want me to give them rides to places.

For instance having a trick I will have to bring up my grades. studing would help me bring up my grades. It would help me get a good job too. Libruray would help by getting information.

Having a truck I would get to school faster and easier. When it is time to go home it wouldn't take a longe time to get there. Getting home to work wouldn't take that long etheir.

Finally I could fix my truck up really good. Put it in a carshow. Astero would be nice, a good one. Me and my friends could go riding down Main St. on Fridays.

Score Point 1

The writer of this response shows no evidence of understanding narration. A subject (driver's license) is given, but the remainder of the paper explains the good and bad points of owning a truck. There is no narrative sequence.

My one wish that I have always wished would come true is that I would become a famous model. I would have my own cover page, and everyone would know my first and last name. It would really make me feel good if I were to be walking down the street one day and someone recognized me and asked me for my autograph. My face would also be printed on bullitan boards, poasters and so on! I would also have alot of money and have two very expensive cars! I would also have enough money for accessories such as gold rings, nice hair accessories and pieces, and what ever else my heart desired. I would also have enough money to have fancy dresses, and expensive clothes and I would also be in style at all time. I would also go on long for vacations to Paris, Hawaii, London England, and maybe even be on the T.V. show "Lifestyles of the rich and famous." This is my one wish that I wish would come true.

Score Point 1

This response shows no evidence that the writer understands narration. A subject is given (become a famous model), but the supporting details are a list of things the writer would have. There is no narrative sequence.

Everyone has different wishes. Mostly people wish for money or they just think of themselves. One night, I wish on a star that there would be no more drugs or alcohol in this world. The next day I heard in the news that stores wouldn't be selling alcohol or cigarettes. I felt so excited. My wish had come true. If anyone was caught smoking or drinking, they would be arrested. I was really happy that I chose that wish.

Score Point 1

This brief response shows little evidence that the writer understands narration. The subject is given (no more drugs or alcohol), but the sequence of events that follows is not sustained sufficiently to achieve a higher score.

2 = The response indicates some sense of narration.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. There is a mixture of general and specific details. They are presented with little, if any, elaboration, producing a list-like response--highlight papers. These responses will exhibit an attempt at organization. In other words, there will be some evidence the writer attempted to control the details. The responses relate to the topic, but in some papers, the writer drifts away from the primary focus or abruptly shifts focus. In other papers, there is a single focus, but there are few, if any, transitions making it difficult to move from idea to idea.

- may display numerous errors in usage.

- may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be numerous errors in sentence construction.

- may display numerous serious errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere somewhat with comprehension.

1992-1993 NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

GRADE 8 -- REQUIRED PROMPTS

PROMPT 1 NARRATIVE

One Saturday you are sitting at home with nothing to do, feeling bored. Suddenly, a magician appears and tells you that you have been given a day in which you can do anything you want to do. Write a story about how you would spend that day.

PROMPT 2 EXPOSITORY

All people have something that is very important to them. Choose the <u>one</u> thing that is the most important to you. Write an essay explaining why it is important to you. Be sure to include supporting details.

PROMPT 3 PERSUASIVE

Many people believe that American students are not learning as much as students in other countries. Do you agree <u>or</u> disagree? Write an essay convincing your teacher that your choice is the right one. Be sure to use details to support your position.

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Could you imagine meeting Michael Jordan? I can, because I all ready did. One day my mother asked me to get some milk from the store. When I got there I saw M. J. getting milk too. I said, "to bad I got it. first". So he begged me and I let him have it, so he said, "I'll never forget that.

That day he called me and invited me to play one-on-one with him at his mansion. After two hours I was leading by 20 points so Jordan Quits. We then went inside and he showed me his trophies. So he let me have one. I took it home and showed it to my mom. Thats when my dream with come true.

Score Point 2

This narrative is a controlled sequence of events. The writer provides the highlights of a story with some specific detail (I was leading by 20 points), but some elaboration is necessary for a higher score.

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One night I wished to win the lottery. I bought tickets the night before the big day. The jackpot was at $4.2 million dollars.

I had a restless night. The next day I woke up and waited for the winning numbers. The numbers came out one by one. The numbers were 41, 30, 42, 9, 8. I looked at my tickets and on one of them I saw all the numbers. I had won. I called right away. After I called I thought about what I would do with the $4.2 million dollars.

I'll buy my family all they will ever want or wanted. I will pay off all the bills for my family. I will fix my life.

After I thought about what I would use it for. I figured out how much money I would get each year. For the next twenty years I would get two hundred twenty thousand dollars a year. I thought to myself "this has been the best wish ever."

Score Point 2

This writer presents the highlights of a story. In the first half of the narrative, the events move very quickly and are not elaborated. The elaboration on what the writer would do with the $4.2 million is very general. More elaboration on other general statements (I had a restless night) is necessary for a higher score.

The Wish

It was late September and the sky was dark and cloudy. I was walking across the park when I ran into a tall, dark and handsome young man, he was wearing a black turtleneck and white pants, his name was Adrian Adrian and I became very good freinds during the school year and after the school year. Everyday after school he walked me home from school, he lived right next to me. Then one day I went to the mall and I fell inlove with a wonderful pair of earings that I could never afford, they were $100.00. Adrian took out his wallet but also did not have enough money. One day when we were walking home from school he took out a pair of earings from his pocket and gave them to me. Adrians gift was the best thing that ever happened to me, it was a dream come true

Score Point 2

This higher level "2" response contains good elaboration through the use of specific details (sky was dark and cloudy; black turtleneck and white pants). It is not clear why the writer included these details, however, since they do not relate to the wish for the earrings. Events in the section about the wish happen very quickly with little or no additional elaboration.

3 = The response indicates an understanding of narration.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. The responses relate to the topic and usually have a single focus. Some of these papers may drift from the focus. Some "3" papers are sparse--they have several clear, specific details with a little elaboration, and they are organized and controlled. Occasionally, a paper will ramble somewhat, repeating ideas or adding an idea for no clear reason, resulting in a lengthy response that otherwise would be sparse. Other "3" papers have elaborated ideas and details, but the writing sample is interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by a lack of transition between ideas or between clusters of ideas.
- may display a pattern of errors in usage.
- may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be errors in sentence construction.
- may display a pattern of errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere with readability.

A Wish that came True

One day I was just thinking of how bad our nations problem with the homeless. I knew that with many the problem could probably be solved. We could buy houses with the money, and also we could buy food. An education could also be available.

I decided to go for a walk. Along the way, I found a lamp. The kind of lamp you see in cartoons with a jeanie inside. I rubbed the lamp and all of the sudden smoke appeared and there was what looked like a jeanie. He said, "I am the jeanie of this lamp and I will grant you one wish." I was in shock, I couldn't believe this was real.

That night I took the lamp home with me because I didn't quite know what I wanted to wish for. Then I thought of how much the homeless problem bothered me. I could wish there was enough money to solve the problem. But I also wanted other things. So I decided to wish for more wishes.

The next day I used one of my wishes for enough money to solve the homeless problem. I was so happy I was able to do this for all the people who were homeless As for the other wishes I'm saving them for a rainy day.

Score Point 3

This narrative has a strong beginning with good elaboration on the homeless situation and finding the lamp. The third paragraph, however, adds very little new material. The ending is general and quick. More elaboration is needed for a higher score.

My Wish

All my life I've had a secret wish of being a well known musician. I've always thought that famous people are really cool, and I want to be one of them. My wish did come true because I worked hard for it.

The day I turned thirteen I decided that I wanted to be a singer, a famous singer. I was young and I knew that I had a talent. My family and friends would have laughed so I didn't tell anyone. Sabrina, one of my friends, discovered my wish when she caught me screaming at the top of my lungs with a Guns-N-Roses tape, she thought I was silly.

After I graduated from High school, I went to a Music Academy for 3 yrs. Following that I went to Hollywood, I Knew it would be easy, but I was wrong. With only six dollars in my pocket, I went in search of work then an appartment. I found work at an old fasioned diner outside of town, I didn't enjoy it. I ran into Sabrina and we became roommates.

Sabrina and I grew apart, as I moved up, I finnaly was singing at a resturant. I moved out and worked even harder. I finnally found a new appartment. By now I was twenty-three and I felt something was missing, so I started sending demo tapes to people. One day I recieved a message, someone wanted to meet me, I started as a backup. I finnally found

someone and got married, following that I recieved a contract with Virgin Records.

In conclusion, I would like to say that, I know it will be hard to get where I want to be. My family is behind me and they are proud of me. I know it will be hard, but it will come true.

Score Point 3

This sustained narrative attempts to cover a ten-year period in the writer's life. The response has unexplained gaps in time (e.g., becoming roommates at the end of third paragraph and growing apart at the beginning of the fourth paragraph). Also, many events are presented as highlights without elaboration. A narrower focus would allow the events to be more evenly developed, resulting in a higher score.

How My Dream Comes True

This is a story of how a dream came true. This dream was wished for, for at least a decade. All because of a magical machine, I can say, I am the richest, most wealthiest person in the world.

One day in the summer, on a bright sunny day I went over to my friends house. In her neighbors backyard was an extremeley giant machine. My friend, whose name is Sparky, had no idea where it came from, especially now that her neighbors moved. We were very curious and wanted to know what it was, and how to use it.

How the miracle all came together. It started off when Sparky said, "I Wish I Knew How This Machine Worked." All of a sudden it turned on. A bunch of lights flashed and smoke rushed out. A face of a geenie appeared on the screen and asked me, If I could wish for anything in the world, what would it be? I replied "My Wish would be to have and own all the money ever created." Before I could wink my eye, a paper flew out in an envelope. I opened the envelope and it was a check for trillions and trillions of dollars.

I ran immediately to the bank and cashed it. Within seconds I was the richest person in the world. I owned the car, mansion, and everything

else of my dreams. So I went home. The next morning when I awoke, I found out disappointingly it wasn't true. It was a dream all right. I went back to my friend neighbors again, and noticed that machine was really there. I ran to it, and it was nothing but a double-sized refrigerator.

Score Point 3

The first half of this response is wordy and general. The second half is more specific (smoke rushed out. A face of a genie appeared on the screen), but the events happen quickly with little elaboration. More development about discovering the double-sized refrigerator would have given the response a stronger closure.

4 = The response indicates a command of narration.

Writing samples in this category:

- generally will have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic. They have a single focus and are organized. There is little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea. Ideas may ramble somewhat and clusters of ideas may be loosely connected; however, an overall progression is apparent. In some papers, development is uneven, consisting of elaborated ideas interspersed with bare unelaborated details.

- may display some errors in usage, but no consistent pattern is apparent.

- may demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax. They avoid excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be few errors in sentence construction.

- may display some errors in mechanics, but these errors will not constitute a consistent pattern.

A Wish Come True

If I could have one wish come true it would be to be a professional tennis player. Although I have not played long I thought that if I kept on playing I could achieve my goal. This was all a fantasy until a warm day in March of my senior year.

I was playing in a tournament in Phoenix when a scout came up to me between matches and invited me to a semi-pro tournament. Hearing a lot about the tournament, I got excited yet nervous to play in it. Knowing how well the players played put a lot of pressure on me.

Immediately after the tournament I went home and thought about how I was going to play in the tournament. Many thoughts rushed through my mind such as winning the championship round or getting killed in the first match. Putting the bad thoughts behind me I practiced and practiced until I felt noone could beat me.

The day of the tournament finally arrived and I won my first match 6-0-6-0-60. I repeated this process until I was in the championship match. Tomorrow would be the most important day of my life. Playing my heart out I beat my opponent 6-4-6-4-7-5 and was offered a spot in the pros.

Finally, after hours of thought I decided to go pro instead of going to college. My decision was based on the

fear of not playing as well in a new environment and having sponsor trouble if I waited until I got out of college. Luckily my decision paid off and I became one of the best tennis players in the world winning more than 172 tournaments.

Score Point 4

This response is unevenly developed. The first half of the narrative is nicely elaborated (excited yet nervous; a lot of pressure on me; winning the championship round or getting killed in the first match), but the writer deals very quickly with the playing of the semi-pro tournament, providing only highlights. The story is well-organized but ends rather abruptly.

My Surprise Birthday

I have always wanted my own obedient dog. A big but not really large size dog. I didn't really care if it was cute, I figured I'd get used to it.

March of '92 I came walking home from school, and saw a whole bunch of puppies gathered across the field from my house. I studied each one and came up liking a black white and gray colored malamute. Running I threw my books on the sofa and stumbled just to get outside and observe the puppies. Stopping two steps from the doorway I then realized that those puppies must have owners. Watching fascinated at how the little brown haired girl with a pretty dress called each by name. The little dogs trailed behind her and out of sight they went into a house, farther down the street.

The next day I begged my parents for that dog, or even any dog. Every chance I got I'd ask them. They kept saying how a terrible problem it would make. But my mind was set on having a dog. And I knew I had to show responsibility.

People thought I was crazy, they'd say "only for a puppy?" "Why not get something better?" I knew I'd like to have a puppy and that was it. Still I asked my parents over and over how good I'd take care of it and keep it fed, watered, and clean.

Finally walking home one day I saw my parents cars outside our driveway. I thought something was wrong.

Quickly I began to walk faster and faster, I then began to run, ignoring the fact that my bookbag and Clarinet case were banging against my knees. When I swung the door open and my parents smiling faces and the same puppy I had looked at greeted me. My birthday, I had completely forgot about my birthday. So from that day on I took on the responsibility happily.

Score Point 4

This response contains a sustained narrative sequence with specific details which elaborate the storyline (I began to run, ignoring the fact that my bookbag and Clarinet case were banging against my knees). Some key ideas, however, are not elaborated (I knew I had to show responsibility). More even development is needed for a higher score.

My WISH

This is a story about how I become a Teen Model.

One day I wished that I would win this Teen Model Serch contest. Then I started putting myself down saying things, like theirs thousands of other girls, why would they pick me?

Then a couple of months went by, all of a sudden we get this call from a represenative of the company. They said that I was one of the finalists and that this summer I would have to go to New York

Well, I was so happy that I could'nt hardly wait. I went and bought some new clothes and started making plans for the trip.

The only problem was the trip was two months away. From then on, it seemed like the hours were days. Finally school ended. It was one week till I left to New York I was so nervous for that whole week I couldnot even stand it. I was packed and ready to go by Saturday. Finally it was friday night. I could not sleep all night, I was so nervous.

Saturday I woke up at 8:00 O'clock because I could'nt wait. My plane was leaving at 1:30 pm. So we had to leave Santa Fe by at least 12:00 O'clock. I got ready and packed the car with all of my stuff.

I took my whole room practicly. My parents and I started. We were out of Santa Fe and I had this feeling that something was missing. I looked around, it looked as if everything was here. Then I figured it out I forgot my Rachel's jacket. I told my perants, and we turned around and went back I grabbed my jacket when we got home and we were off again.

We finally got to the airport and I told my perants goodbye. Then I got my luggage and I was off. I loaded on plane. I was a little scared cause this was the first time I was on my own No parents around to baby me. I was off to New York. I was nervous.

The plane ride was and hour and a half long. Then I landed in New York. I got off the plane and there was a sign that said all model contestants go to the conference room. I got luggage and went to the conferenc room. There were some of the most beautiful girls ever. I went in there and sat down. A few minutes later a lady walked in and handed us all ribbons with our state on it. Then she took us back to our hotel and I ended up rooming with somebody that was from California. Her name was Wendy.

She had blonde hair and green-bluish eyes. She had freckles and white skin like a ghost. She was very pretty I thought, she's going to be the one to win this contest.

The week was very exciting and the week flew by. The week I saw lots of messeums, had some

photo shoots and saw the Statue of liberty. I had lots of fun. Before I knew it, it was Sunday, on Tuesday we learn to go home and tomorrow night we find out who the winners are.

That night all of us 56 girls stayed up talking and gave our addresses to each other.

The next day Wendy and I got up early and got ready for the day. We went and took some group shots for each of us to remember each other by.

Then it was about one (1) o'clock and we all went back to our hotel rooms, and we got ready for the big night. Wendy looked so good in the little black formal hers was a lot littler and looked alot better. We took one last look in the mirror and went down stairs to award ceramony.

When we got down there everyone was there. It looked so neat how the placed was fixed up. Then we sat and ate Then after they started with the awards first they gave out flowers to all of the fifty contestors that did not win. Wendy or I were called up so we thought we had to be one of the finals.

Then they started calling up the final six. First they called up the fifth, then the forth, then, then third was Wendy. After that I was so nervous that I could'nt stand it. The second person was from Texas. After that I started crying then they said the winner is and called my name.

I went up there and, I was cring so hard I could'nt stand it. I thought I was in a dream. But this was a reality, after that they threw a big party and everybody was congradulating me.

The next day we left at nine and on the way home I still could'nt belive I won. I was going to have my own cover page and was picked from some of the most beatiful girls it was a triat. I got home and my perants were waiting for me. All the way home I still could not belive I won. But, two months later after going back and forth to L.A. I finally got my covir page

Score Point 4

This very lengthy narrative covers many events leading up to the key idea of winning the "Teen Model Search" contest. The writer includes many more details than the reader wants or needs to know (the plane ride was an hour and a half long; I got luggage), but the contest itself is left unexplained. The response lacks the sense of completeness and unity necessary for a higher score.

5 = The response indicates a generally strong command of narration.

Writing samples in this category:

- have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are organized and progress logically; however, there may be a lapse. The key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details. Some writers take compositional risks and are, for the most part, successful. Although these papers are flawed, they have a sense of completeness and unity.
- have few errors in usage.
- demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There are few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- have few errors in mechanics.

One day as I was about to hit the hay I looked at myself in the mirror. I said to myself, "Why am I so ugly." I hate being such an ugly monster. No one will ever like me. Especially gorgeous guys. I told myself in the mirror "I wished I looked like Cindy Crawford. I fell asleep thinking I sure would love at least one extremely gorgeous guy to love me, and slober over me. The next morning I woke up and went to the restroom. I looked in the mirror, and wiped my eyes. I looked away, and looked back. Holy ?¿#!*. Oh my good lord I'm as beautiful as mumble mumble mmm mmm. I thought back to yesterday, and remembered what I said about Cindy Crawford. My mom came in and said "What's wrong!"

"Look at me mom!"

"What, you look just how you looked yesterday"

I supposed that since she sees me every day she didn't notice the difference. I put on my best set of clothes, and I walked to the bus. As each familiar car went by, they asked if I wanted a Ride. They must have noticed the difference. When I got on the bus everyone just admired my new beauty. I just walked through the isle and everyone asked me to sit with them, but I sat with my freind Vero. Everyones eyes were just on me. When I got to school everyone would just stare.

When the bell rang I left to my first hour class (2nd pd.) The guy I was madly in love with was there. When I walked in everybodys heads turned except Joaquin's. Finally he looked up, And when he did it seemed as if he had seen the "light to heaven." When I went to sit down beside him he was just speechless. He mumbled something about Crawford And that he loved me. That class never came to an end. As we were working on our work we both turned at the same time And I looked into his oval shaped hazal eyes. I melted. Joaquin gently got my face, And gave me a cute little kiss on the cheek. When the bell rang we took a long walk around campus. During that walk he expressed his true, deep feelings for me. I was deeply astonished. We both walked back to our classes. When the day was over he walked me to my bus, And to end the day perfect he gave me another kiss, And said he loved me. As I drove away I only wished everyday could be like this.

Score Point 5

This response shows that the writer has a generally strong command of narration. There are good transitions throughout the response which help create a tightly sequenced storyline. In addition, the writer has successfully used a compositional risk, internal monologue (Oh my good lord I'm as beautiful), to provide additional details. More specific and even elaboration is necessary for a higher score.

Its Saturday night and I'm home dreading that awful day, Valentines day. All my friends have a Valentine boyfriend, except for me. Laying in my bed thinking of that nice, sweet gorgeous perfect in every way, ninth grader Freddy. Wishing that he would give me that humongous red, silver ballon that crys out my name at the mall. Getting up depressed I call my my boyfriendless friend, only to tell her about my problems and that I dont want to go to school on Valentines day.

Its that awful day, Valentines day. Im at school getting depressed because all my friends recieved a Valentine even the boyfriendless one. It was the last period of the day, I could have died and still felt the same. Then they called me to the office. Walking down the hall wondering what my mom brought me this year, probably as usual, a small box of candy and a small, but thoughtful card.

As I walk into the office I notice a small, heart box of candy next to a huge white teddy bear holding several multi-colored balloons, mainly white and red. Walking up to the secretary I said "I'm here to pick up the gift for me." She got up and handed me the huge white teddy bear saying

"Its the biggest of the bunch."

I almost cried hugging that huge teddy

bear. My arms rapped around the furry chest and reading the one balloon that read I love you. "Whoa my mom really out did herself this year." I opened the card attached and it read "Marcela I really think alot of you and about you your beauty is what makes me want to come to school, This is really hard for me to ask, but will you please go out with me? Yours truly Freddy" I scremed with joyfullness. Not knowing how loud I screamed. People were around me asking "are you ok.

"Yes" I yelled with a giant Colgate smile. I walked into class and just as I expected all the girls were envious, asking who gave it to you, and I replied "who else Freddy" after school he came to my locker hugged my wrist and said "Will you go out with me

Score Point 5

This writer uses vivid details (I could have died and still felt the same; a giant Colgate smile) and a sense of suspense to enhance the storyline. There is a switch from present tense to past tense halfway through the response, however, and the ending is too abrupt for this response to receive a higher score.

Ever since I was young, I have had a great desire to explore the East coast of the United States. I would just love to see the other side of this country for myself. Well, one dull day my wish came true, this is how the story goes.

I was laying in the hammock reading a novel in the summer sun and breeze. This was just a common day, no different from any other. I was just getting caught up in the book when I was abruptly interrupted by my ten year-old brother Andrew's voice calling my name. He was talking so fast that I could hardly understand him. I told him to slow down and get a grip. He explained how our dad had won a free vacation to anywhere on the East coast. This came as a real shock to me. Our family had seldom ever taken a vacation together. The first words that came into my mind were Boston, Massachusettes. I had always fantasized of arriving in Boston and spending a couple weeks in the beautiful city. I had basically forgotten it because I was so caught up in believing that it could never happen. Now I'm about to see this dream come to past. Now I climbed out of the hammock and ran inside to ask my mom if it was true. She assured me that it was but said that we still didn't know whereabouts the Pacific coast we would stay. I brought up my idea of flying to Boston because dad had already been there and knew his way around, while it would be new and different for us. My mom gave me

that "we'll-have-to-see-about-that" look. She said we can talk to dad about it.

That night at the dinner table, after a lot of begging and pleading on my part, my father agreed that "BeanTown" was the place. I was so thrilled, I could just scream! I didn't though, I just kept my cool. After I shut the door of my bedroom, I let out some kind of whoop of joy.

The next three days were the longest ever. With two weeks worth of packing to do, and mostly just waiting was agonizing. Then all to quickly I found myself thousands of feet above the earth looking out of the airplane Window. Then we were in the Boston Airport terminal waiting for our luggage.

We stepped outside of the airport just as my dad pulled up in a shinny, black Lincoln Contenental. The ride to the hotel was beautiful, the weather was perfect, and I was just glad to be out of New Mexico.

We got settled and my mom and I decided to tour the downtown area before supper. The buildings were amazing, they just towered above the crowds of people and cars. Every store was crammed with tourists, talking in many scattered languages. I was interested in the many art galleries and dance studios which

there were very many of.

The whole two weeks, to my surprise, went by very slowly. Every day was filled with new, and enlightening things to do and see. We have eaten in some in some of the worlds best seafood resaurants and others.

It was time to head home, and I was ready, too. I had never been so excited, and had so much fun in my entire 14 years. The flight home was long and dull but I ended up falling asleep anyway. This was most definetly a dream come true.

Score Point 5

The writer of this response demonstrates a generally strong command of narration. The response progresses logically, and there are appropriate and varied details (that "we'll-have-to-see-about-that" look; they just towered above the crowds of people). However, there is some lack of clarity (the flight home was very long and dull but I ended up falling asleep anyway). A stronger conclusion would have helped the response receive a higher score.

6 = The response indicates a strong command of narration.

Writing samples in this category:

- have an effective opening and a closing that ties the piece together. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are well-developed, complete compositions that are organized and progress logically from beginning to end. Many of these writers take compositional risks resulting in highly effective, vivid responses.
- have very few, if any, errors in usage.
- demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There will be very few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- have very few, if any, errors in mechanics.

My Wish

"Oh-Mom! Do you think you could get me a new pair of shoes for track?," I asked my mom as we were walking through the mall.

My mom gave me one of her looks and said, "Why? What's wrong with the ones you have?"

"They're old," I told her.

"We don't have enough money right now," she said and closed the subject.

My family was not exactly bad off. We had our own house and enough money for the things we need. I was sick of having to worry about the cost of things I wanted.

Later that night I went for a walk I noticed a very bright star in the sky. I recited the poem "Star light, Star bright" and wished that my family was rich. Feeling childish, I went inside and went to bed.

The next morning, when I woke up, I found myself in a strange room. I went to the closet and found it full of expensive clothes. I found an outfit I liked and got dressed.

I left my room and wandered to the kitchen. My parents were sitting at the table talking about investments. Some strange lady was standing at the stove fixing breakfast. Then it hit me. My wish had come true.

After I ate, my dad and I walked out to the garage. Inside was a black BMW, and a Mercedes. We climbed into the BMW and he took me to school.

When I got to school I found I had new friends. They were the same people my friends and I used to call "snobs." My old friends didn't even talk to me now.

All and all, I had a miserable day. I realized my new "friends" only liked my money. I missed my old friends, and being able to act crazy with them. I began to wonder if being rich was worth it.

That night, I went for a walk. I found the same star and wished life was back the way it was.

The next morning I woke up in my old messy room. I realized how good I really had it. I had a family that loved me, and friends that cared. I realized money isn't everything.

Score Point 6

This response shows a strong command of narration. It progresses logically from the first desire for track shoes to the more general wish (that my family was rich) and on to the consequences (my old friends didn't talk to me), to the realization (wonder if being rich was worth it), and to the moral (money isn't everything). This highly successful organizational strategy provides completeness and unity in the response.

I WISH

I had just finished college and couldn't find a job. These days were very solemn for me, I needed adventure in my life instead of the low paying slum job I had at the old diner. I hadn't been able to find a "real" job in my field: robotic programming. That night I was at a luxurious hotel on the San Fransisco Bay, in my dreams of course, and then it happened: a blinding light and a sudden disiness and disorientation that followed.

Instead of the couch bed of mine, I was laying on a king size motel bed. I got up and then saw a sign that said "Welcome to the Hotel Mark". I glanced around the room and noticed that it was of massive proportions. Elegant draperys hung on all the windows, a big screen T.V. with cable stood at my command. Suddenly a strange nausea overcame me and I went to the restroom. After I emptied all that was in my stomach I took a look out the window, I saw that the building was on a large hill. In the distance I could see a huge bay, It struck me: Of course, the wish! This was the famouse Mark Hotel off San Fransisco Bay. I again felt dizzy and confused. I lay down on the bed and soon fell asleep.

In the morning I went to the "Top of

the Mark" (the famouse revolving restaurant) for a complementary breakfast. Afterwards I went to the large lobby and the clerk said that my car was waiting, so I went out and saw a nice little BMW waiting. The valet had driven it up. I drove the car over to the dock and looked around and finally saw a huge yacht. A man stepped out and said "why sir, you're early, would you like to come aboard?, You are one of the guests, aren't you?" Startled, I abruptly said "Yes, Yes of course!" He helped me aboard and I went into the main salon. After I ate an appetizer the rest of the guests arrived and thats when we cast off. I soon found out that I had previously paid for the trip. The work that I did on board was harder than I expected, storms and rain came frequently on the harsh sea. Our first stop was in Acapulco, Mexico.

I never had such spicy food before. We then sailed on to Hawaii, Tahiti, Bali, Singapore and Japan. This was wonderful, not only was the food great but I had the chance to take wonderful photographs. The hotels we stayed in were quiet marvelous. The hotel in Singapore was old and had beautifully carved stone walls. We next went to India and sailed across the Arabian Sea and up the Suez Canal to

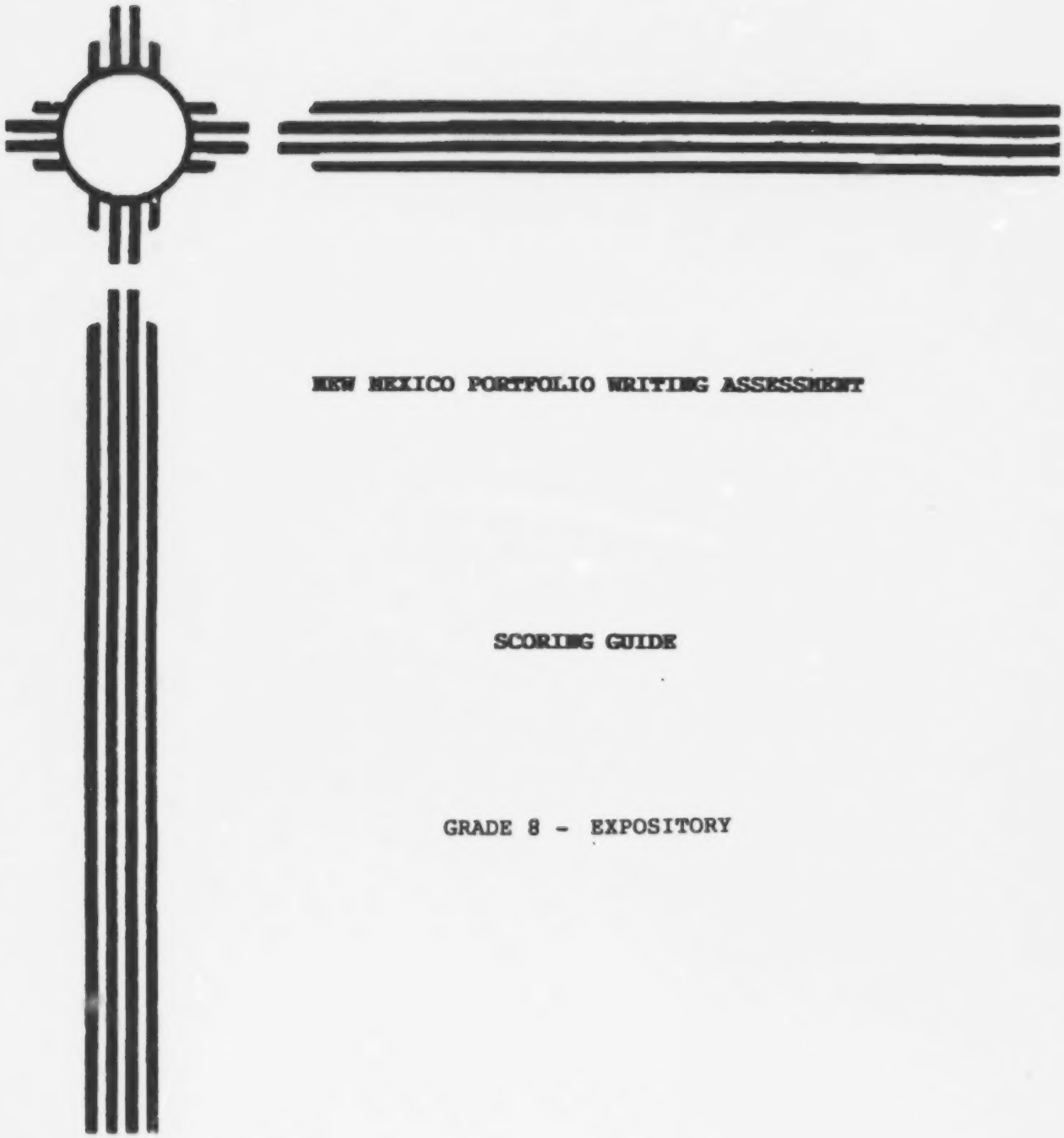
Alexandria, Egypt. We saw many crocadiles swimming along the banks of the river. Eventually we arrived back in the U.S.A. and I said my goodbyes to the wonderful crew and the other guests on the ship. And then it happened again, the blinding light and the sudden disorientation and I opened my eyes and I was lying in my slum bed again and I saw that I had a tan! But of course this was no coinsidence!

P.S. the pictures came out great.

Score Point 6

This response has a very effective opening which foreshadows the events to take place (I needed adventure in my life). There are varied and appropriate details as well as vivid imagery throughout the paper (a sudden disiness and disorientation; rain came frequently on the harsh sea). The narrative progresses logically to the highly effective closing.

NOTES



NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

SCORING GUIDE

GRADE 8 - EXPOSITORY

NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT - EXPOSITORY SCORING RUBRIC

STRONG COMMAND OF EXPOSITION	GENERALLY STRONG COMMAND OF EXPOSITION	COMMAND OF EXPOSITION	PARTIAL COMMAND OF EXPOSITION	LIMITED COMMAND OF EXPOSITION	INADEQUATE COMMAND OF EXPOSITION
SCORE POINT 6	**SCORE POINT 5**	**SCORE POINT 4**	**SCORE POINT 3**	**SCORE POINT 2**	**SCORE POINT 1**
Has an effective opening and closing that ties the piece together	Has an opening and a closing	Generally has an opening and closing	May not have an opening and/or closing	May not have an opening and/or closing	May not have an opening and/or closing
Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and usually has a single focus; some responses may drift from the focus	Some responses relate to the topic but drift or abruptly shift focus	May state a subject or a list of subjects; may have an uncertain focus that must be inferred
Well-developed, complete response that is organized and progresses logically; writer takes compositional risks resulting in highly effective, vivid responses	Key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details; some risks may be taken and are mostly successful; may be flawed, but has sense of completeness and unity	Development may be uneven with elaborated ideas interspersed with bare, unelaborated details	Some responses are sparse with clear, specific details but little elaboration; others are longer but ramble and repeat ideas	Details are a mixture of general and specific with little, if any, elaboration, producing a list-like highlight response	Details are general, may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent
	Organized and progresses logically, but there may be a lapse	Some responses are organized with little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea; other responses may ramble somewhat with clusters of ideas that may be loosely connected, but an overall progression is apparent	Some responses have elaborated details but are interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by lack of transitions	Attempt at organization; some attempt to control details but few, if any, transitions	Some lengthier papers are disorganized and difficult to follow; may show no sense of planning
Very few, if any, errors in usage	Few errors in usage	Some errors in usage, no consistent pattern	May display a pattern of errors in usage	May display numerous errors in usage	May have severe problems with usage including tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, word choice
Variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes demonstrates syntactic and verbal sophistication; very few, if any, errors in sentence construction	Syntactic and verbal sophistication through a variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes	May demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax; avoids excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may contain a few errors in sentence construction	May demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may display errors in sentence construction	Excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may contain numerous errors in sentence construction	May contain an assortment of grammatically incorrect sentences; may be incoherent or unintelligible
Very few, if any, errors in mechanics	Few errors in mechanics	May display some errors in mechanics but no consistent pattern	May display a pattern of errors in mechanics	May display numerous serious errors in mechanics	May display severe errors in mechanics.
			NOTE: Errors may interfere with readability	NOTE: Errors may interfere somewhat with comprehension	NOTE: Errors may interfere with comprehension.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

This is the prompt 8th Grade students used when writing the following papers. It may be used for practice with your students.

> Many people are concerned about our environment. Think about one problem with our environment that you think needs correcting. Tell what the problem is and explain why the problem needs to be corrected.

1 = The response indicates an inadequate command of exposition.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. These papers are on topic and demonstrate at least a minimal attempt to respond to the topic by stating a subject or giving a list of subjects. Details are vague and/or general. They may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent. Some of the lengthier papers are disorganized, making them consistently difficult to follow. Others will relate to the topic but will have an uncertain focus. In these papers the reader has to infer what the focus is. The overriding characteristic of many of these papers is a lack of control with no sense of planning.

- may have severe problems with usage. This includes problems in tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, and word choice.

- may demonstrate an assortment of grammatically incorrect sentences. Some statements may be either incoherent or unintelligible.

- may display severe errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere with comprehension.

Saving Our Enviornment

There are many ways in which we can save the environment in which we live. To begin with when brushing your teeth. Don't leave the water running if you're not using it. Also we can more electricity by burning more candles and using less electricity. Campers can help save the enviornment be being more careful and put out campfires, and also by putting trash in its proper place. Joining clean up campaigns will help out a lot too. To conclude, there are four ways in which we can help save the environment.

Score Point 1

This response does not directly address the prompt. Four ways to save the environment are listed (using less electricity, put out campfires), but there are no details to explain why a particular environmental problem needs to be corrected. The writer needs to focus on the required task to receive a higher score.

Pollution

Pollution is caused by to much trash for an area. Also, pollution can be in lake, ocean, river, and streams. Then, theres chemical pollution with is caused by factors. Pollution degrades water quality. It also kills water animals and animals who drink it. In conclusion I hope someone tries to stop pollution.

Score Point 1

This essay has a single focus (pollution). There are only a few details given to explain why polluting should be corrected (pollution degrades water quality; It also kills water animals and animals who drink it). More specific details would contribute to a higher score.

2 = The response indicates a limited command of exposition.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. There is a mixture of general and specific details. They are presented with little, if any, elaboration, producing a list-like response--highlight papers. These responses will exhibit an attempt at organization. In other words, there will be some evidence the writer attempted to control the details. The responses relate to the topic, but in some papers, the writer drifts away from the primary focus or abruptly shifts focus. In other papers, there is a single focus, but there are few, if any, transitions making it difficult to move from idea to idea.

- may display numerous errors in usage.

- may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be numerous errors in sentence construction.

- may display numerous serious errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere somewhat with comprehension.

Nowadays we have many problems with our environment. We are the cause of all our problems. One of our most hazardous problem is pollution.

Pollution in our environment is probably the worst thing that has come up in the past and has risen. If this continues the pollution problem is going to be worse.

There are many types of pollution. There is air pollution, noise pollution, and water pollution. The type of pollution I am talking about is air pollution.

Air pollution is a serious. The air is getting polluted because of the factories, cars, and burning of trees or forest fires. See, all of these are caused by us. We are the source who permits all the pollution to go on.

There are some ways we the people can correct this problem. The factories could produce less and not have many machines. We could carpool and save much more gas. People do not have to burn trees. We've got to stop this.

Score Point 2

This writer gives a subject (air pollution) and a few general details (hazardous, going to be worse) to explain why the problem needs to be corrected. The response then drifts into a discussion of causes of pollution and how to correct the problem.

Environment Problems

I feel that a problem that we have with our environment is all of the pollution.

I know that this is wrong because all of the plastic, tin, etc., is left on the streets and animals eat these objects and or get wrapped in them and choke but either way they die. All of this pollution is also dirting our air. It is making the air that we breathe incredibly unhealthy.

There are many ways that I could feel that I could change the things that I feel is wrong with the environment. One of the things that I feel I could do is to advertise what I feel is wrong with our environment for people who are unaware about it. I could also get picket signs and protest infront of a building that I know for sure I would get some attention from. Hopefully I'd make a little bit of difference if any.

I might also try the "If it was gone" approach. Showing what our world would look like if all the pollution was gone. I feel that one of those things would be or make a difference. I know that it has been tried before but, it wouldn't hurt to keep trying because

alot of people in this world are missing up as it is and having things wrong with the environment doesn't help much either. After I have finished my goal I hope it would help at least a little (which I have mentioned before) but, I wouldn't stop until I've made a difference.

Score Point 2

This writer addresses the task required by the prompt in the first paragraph and gives a couple of reasons (plastic is left on the streets, dirting our air) with a little elaboration on each reason (animals eat these objects and or get wrapped in them and choke). The response then shifts to a discussion of how to draw attention to the pollution problem.

The Tropical Rainforests

The animals in the tropical rainforests are in great danger of their lives. First of all, the animals are dying because lumber workers are chopping down trees that are some animals' homes. Next, the men who live around the tropical area kill the animals for no apparent reason. They don't eat most of the animals they kill. Also, when the land deteriorates, rapidly in some areas, the productivity in that portion is dropped. Last but not least, the fir and spruce trees found in the tropics are disappearing because of the harsh environment of the surrounding area. To sum up, the animals in the rainforests are in great danger.

Score Point 2

This response has a single focus (tropical rainforests) and is organized. There are some clear, specific details with a little elaboration (They don't eat most of the animals they kill), but some ideas are unclear (the productivity in that portion is dropped) or general (harsh environment). More specificity is needed for a higher score.

3 = The response indicates a partial command of exposition.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. The responses relate to the topic and usually have a single focus. Some of these papers may drift from the focus. Some "3" papers are sparse--they have several clear, specific details with a little elaboration, and they are organized and controlled. Occasionally, a paper will ramble somewhat, repeating ideas or adding an idea for no clear reason, resulting in a lengthy response that otherwise would be sparse. Other "3" papers have elaborated ideas and details, but the writing sample is interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by a lack of transition between ideas or between clusters of ideas.
- may display a pattern of errors in usage.
- may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be errors in sentence construction.
- may display a pattern of errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere with readability.

Our Enviroment

Today I am discussing something very important and hazardous to everyone health. The topic is air pollution. Every year millions of people get lung cancer or die because of this problem. It must be stopped.

In Las Angeles smog is very dangerous there. When you fly in this city you can't even see the bright light or the big skyscrapers. Its like one big skyscrapers. Its like one big cloud covering the city. Humans along with wildlife species die because of this dangerous air. The earth was beautiful and the air was clean. That was then This is now. Our earth is polluted and we can hardely breathe anymore because of the smog. I hope no air pollution heads in our direction.

Air pollution comes from alot of different places. Here are a few of them.

Cars pollute the air in a big way. Cars give off exhaust fumes that really harm and pollute the air.

Factories produse a lot of air pollution in the United States. Factories give off a lot of pollution and we are dying each year because of this. They are selling a lot of stuff but they are also killing us to. Even though we need to keep warm some of the pollution comes from the chimneys that we live off of.

Score Point 3

This response gives a subject (air pollution) and has several clear reasons (lung cancer, we can hardly breathe) for correcting it. There is some elaboration on the smog in Los Angeles (you can't even see the bright light or the big skyscrapers). The focus of the response then shifts to how pollution is caused. There is enough writing on the required task, however, for this response to receive a "3."

Rain Forests

I'm doing my report on rain forests. Rain forests are being destroyed by humans. Their are many animals of all kinds that live in these forests. The trees and plants are an important factor in these forests and they are being destroyed.

The forests are 90% plants and trees. IF you take 8½ acres of these forests, you would find about 179 different kinds of trees. When people cut down these trees they cannot grow back in a long time because the soil becomes ruined. These trees are used for air (oxygen) and medecines, and those are the only uses for which we need them. We should not make paper out of them.

When we cut down the trees, we are taking homes away from animals. A lot of animals are taken from jungles to make as pets for people. We need to leave these animals alone. Some people even hunt monkeys for their skins. It's horrible what some people do.

The destruction in these forests are immense. We can't take down these trees because they serve as 50% of our air they give us. Medecine is the only logical reason for taking down some trees. People shouldn't be so greedy.

My conclusion is that we should stop destroying our rain forests to leave them be. Rain forests have important resources for all the living animals in them. Save our rain forests.

Score Point 3

This writer provides several specific details with elaboration (179 kinds of trees, oxygen, homes for animals) to explain why the rainforests should not be destroyed. Although the closing is very effective, there is a drift in the third paragraph (animals taken from jungles) and repetition of ideas in the fourth paragraph (air, medicine) which prevent this response from receiving a higher score.

Pollution

In our world today, we have a very big problem with pollution. Although there are many types of pollution, air is one of the most common forms.

In the past, air pollution hasn't been very bad, or at least not as bad as it is now. I'm sure that if we don't do something about air pollution, now, ten years from now it'll be worse than ever.

Not many people take into consideration what is happening to the ozone layer. We have a giant hole in the ozone layer. Everyday ultra violet rays enter the atmosphere through that hole. Humans get skin cancer from UV rays.

There are a lot of products for the public to buy to protect against UV rays, but they don't always work. Too many people in this world have skin cancer.

If we don't clean up our world today, our children might not have a world tomorrow. To me, my children's future is very important.

Score Point 3

This response is organized and controlled. There is effective elaboration on the ozone layer (giant hole, ultra violet rays, skin cancer, products don't always work). Other ideas, however, are general (worse than ever, might not have a world). More elaboration is necessary for a higher score.

4 = The response indicates a command of exposition.

Writing samples in this category:

- generally will have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic. They have a single focus and are organized. There is little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea. Ideas may ramble somewhat and clusters of ideas may be loosely connected; however, an overall progression is apparent. In some papers, development is uneven, consisting of elaborated ideas interspersed with bare unelaborated details.

- may display some errors in usage, but no consistent pattern is apparent.

- may demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax. They avoid excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be few errors in sentence construction.

- may display some errors in mechanics, but these errors will not constitute a consistent pattern.

The Environment

People do not realize how much they contribute to the earth's environmental problems. An example of this is people littering. This is probably one of the biggest problems, but it doesn't have to be if we put the trash in the trash can, and the recycleables in their receptacles. This is one way to help our environment. If we do not do this, in a few years, the earth will be over flowing with unnecessary trash.

Another reason we shouldn't litter is it isn't a pretty sight seeing all kinds of trash on beautiful land, along highways, on trees, and everywhere else. Various types of litter can be harmful to the animals. Littering can also lead to other problems such as water pollution.

Water pollution can be very harmful to the beings that drink the water. People have to be careful with what kind of fish they eat because of some of the harmful elements found in fish such as mercury. Things such as this can make people very sick, maybe even sick enough to die.

This is very annoying because all of this could be avoided if only people wouldn't litter, and be less careless. This is "America the Beautiful," so let's keep it that way.

Score Point 4

This response has a single focus (littering) and an overall progression of ideas. Although some of the elaboration is specific (trash along highways, on trees), much of it is general (harmful to the animals, be less careless). Smoother transitions between ideas and more specific elaboration would contribute to a higher score.

Water Pollution

Water pollution is a problem that faces the entire world. It can be found in the largest oceans, and in the smallest lakes. Water pollution wasn't around before we started to revolutionize our world. Water pollution is now overcoming the natural and man-made lakes and rivers. We must do something about it!

Many things are polluting our water. The pollutants can be grouped into three major groups. These are trash, toxic wastes, and nuclear wastes. Trash is pretty much self explanitory. People are dumping our trash into the oceans. Toxic wastes include oil from oil spills, sludge from factories, and chemicals that are left over from production lines. Nuclear wastes are simply thrown into the ocean. If these containers came open, all of the oceans would be ruined.

The water pollution problem has to be solved in the near future. Do you want to drink water that MAY HAVE nuclear waste in it? Some animals don't only have to drink that water, they HAVE to live in it! Everytime we dump oil into the ocean, we Kill millions of animals. The oil coats their bodies, and will Kill them.

As you can see, water is a very important

part of our life. Why should we abuse our supply of fresh, clean water? We need to save our water if we want to live a healthy life, and if we want to preserve the ocean life of the world.

Score Point 4

This sustained response gives several specific ideas to explain why water pollution needs to be corrected. The development is uneven, consisting of elaborated ideas (where it can be found, animals have to live in it) interspersed with unelaborated details (drinking water). Although there is a minor drift in the second paragraph (types of pollutants), the overall fluency and persuasive tone make this paper eligible for a "4."

The Environmental Problem

There are many problems facing us today. The environment is believed to be the most pressing issue, though. Because of our unconcern for our precious planet, we have almost ruined it.

It is hard to go through a day without noticing traces of our ignorance of the world we live in. There is trash everywhere you look. For one, people should not litter, but recycle. Greed, along with ignorance, destroys our environment. Just look at what has been done, and is still being done to the rainforests.

Much worse than either of there problems is the fact that the ozone layer in our atmosphere is depleting rapidly. So far we have found no solution to this serious problem. The ozone layer supports our life. Without it all humans, animals, and living things, would eventually die. The ozone layer is what protects the earth from enormous amounts of radioactive - ultraviolet rays given off by the sun. With the ozone layer in its correct state most of these ultravioletrays are blocked and bounced back into outer space. Now that the ozone is deteriorating, more than safe amounts of radiation can pass through to the earth, causing two problems. One is that this radiation causes skin cancer which will usually lead to death. Second, is the problem with global warming. This is caused by these rays penetrating the atmosphere and not being able to get out. Resulting in the literal baking of the planet. I do believe though, that problems such as this can be solved. In time and further study our environmental mishaps can be corrected.

Score Point 4

This response exhibits a command of expository writing. Although trash and rainforests are mentioned in the effective opening, there is a single focus (ozone layer). The writer uses vivid language (rays are blocked and bounced back, literal baking of the planet) and cause-and-effect elaboration to explain the ideas. The response is organized and controlled, but more elaboration is needed for a higher score.

5 = The response indicates a generally strong command of exposition.

Writing samples in this category:

- have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are organized and progress logically; however, there may be a lapse. The key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details. Some writers take compositional risks and are, for the most part, successful. Although these papers are flawed, they have a sense of completeness and unity.
- have few errors in usage.
- demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There are few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- have few errors in mechanics.

The Environment Problem

Trash is the worst dillemna in our environment. It changes a beautiful metropolitan area into an ugly city. To animals, trash is very harmful. Trash can cause death to anyone.

Pick up trash so we don't have an unattractive city. Trash can bring less tourists to a metropolitan. Less tourists can mean less money, and that can mean less supplies for the city. When there is an ugly city, no one wants to live in that area. Then alot of parents don't want their children to live in a contaminated area.

Trash can do terrible things for the Earth's creatures. Our animals will perish if people aren't careful with our trash. When people don't cut plastic coke rings, birds an other animals can extinguish by choking on them. Animals can get caught in any kind of trash, even plastic.

Sometimes the animals even eat trash if trash is just laying around on the ground.

This world needs help on how to pick up trash, and throw it away in the right place. The people in this world should clean up this place. Have a heart, "Keep America Beautiful!"

Score Point 5

This response is organized and controlled and has a sense of completeness and unity. The key ideas (unattractive city, harmful to animals) are developed through cause and effect, but the elaboration is sometimes general (that can mean less supplies, throw it away in the right place). Additional specific details and more fluency are needed for a higher score

I think the biggest problem in our countries enviroment is the garbage and litter. It is not only unhealthy to our enviroment, but to humans and animals too. The space for garbage is getting lesser, and there isn't enough room to dump it in. It is not only that but to have garbage laying around all over is a bad impression of our country. We have to help it as much as possible.

The garbage is unhealthy for our enviroment in a number of ways. For one it pollutes our water. Polluted water causes fish and other animals that drink that water to die. It also pollutes our air. That is bad for humans, animals, plants, etc. The garbage and litter leaves a bad smell in some parts of the country and doesn't look very good.

It is also unhealthy for humans. It can kill us. Polluted air and water can get humans very sick. If garbage is around to long it could cause diseases.

A big concern about garbage is that there is not enough room to dump it. The country is already full of garbage pits, and there isn't many more places to put it. Garbage it taking up half of

the enviroment. We are dumping it in oceans, riivers, under the ground and where ever else we can. One reason for there being so much garbage is, not everything is biodegradeable, so it stays there too long.

It is not only bad for us but it also gives the United States a bad impression. It is embarassing for tourist to see it. It smells bad, and makes our country look junky in some places. It probably gives an impression that were sloppy, dirty, and don't really care about our enviroment.

What can we do to at least help it somewhat? We can start by stop using as much things that aren't biodegradeable, like plastics, tin, etc. The things that are able to be recycled, should start being recycled more often so it wont go to waste or take up space. People should stop littering. And for the litter that is already there could be helped by cleaning committees.

Score Point 5

This response exhibits a generally strong command of expository writing. The writer presents three reasons (unhealthy, space, bad impression) why the garbage problem needs to be corrected and elaborates each of them. However, some of the elaboration is either general (bad for humans, doesn't look good) or repetitious (smells bad). The solutions to the problem given in the last paragraph serve as an effective closure. More specific elaboration would contribute to a higher score.

6 = The response indicates a strong command of exposition

Writing samples in this category:

- have an effective opening and a closing that ties the piece together. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are well-developed, complete compositions that are organized and progress logically from beginning to end. Many of these writers take compositional risks resulting in highly effective, vivid responses.
- have very few, if any, errors in usage.
- demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There will be very few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- have very few, if any, errors in mechanics.

There are many diffrent problems with our enviroment that need Correcting. There is pollution, trash, and people are destroying our Rainforests. The one I am most Concerned about is our Rainforests.

The Rainforests are being destroyed at an alarming rate. Trees are being bulldozed to make room for building. Trees give us a lot. I don't think it is our right to destroy them.

Animals use the trees in many ways. Some use the trees for protection, a place to hide in. They provide homes for many animals. They are there to give the animals food. When we kill the trees we are killing the animals.

Trees also provide us with something we would not be able to live without. It is called Oxygen. We will not be able to breathe if we destroy the the places where we Obtain Oxygen. We have to be carefure on how much Rainforest we destroy, because we are slowly bringing this Earth to an early end.

I think we need to find a new place to build, other then the Rainforest. Find a less important place to farm. We cannot keep killing animals, trees and air.

There are many other places to build homes. We are destroying our earth. The Rainforests are not the only problem. We are becoming lazy and careless and we are going to pay for it.

Score Point 6

Although not as vivid as some "6's," this response is organized and fluent. Key ideas are evenly developed with appropriate and varied details (trees are being bulldozed, a place to hide, destroy the places where we obtain oxygen). The closure effectively unifies the writing.

The Rainforests

I think a major concern I have about the environment is the cutting down of the rainforests. People just don't understand that we need them to survive. Without them there would be no oxygen.

Right now the rainforests are being cut down at an alarming rate. Most of the wood from the forests are being used for combustion. That doesn't help the environment either, considering the gasses set off ruin the ozone layer. Only oxygen produced by the tropical rainforests can help reconstruct the now disintegrating ozone layer.

Not only is cutting down the rainforests harmful to humans but it is endangering many exotic animals. Many rare species of birds are loosing the trees, their homes. Other animals are loosing out too. Think of the food chain. By cutting down the rainforests many very small animals can't eat plants and trees so they die out. Thus, the next larger animals can't prey on the smaller animals. And so on and so on. Until eventually when it comes to the larger animals they end up having no food, and are forced to die out too.

If we as humans don't do something to try to stop this, we too will die out. We are be the solution. After all we are the source.

Score Point 6

This response exhibits a strong command of expository writing. Key ideas are developed with specific details (gasses ruin the oxygen layer; rare species of birds are losing the trees, their homes), and there is verbal sophistication (reconstruct the now disintegrating ozone layer).

A disappearing forest

There are many problems our environment faces. Examples of these problems are water, air, and land pollution, the greenhouse effect, and toxic waste. There is one other problem which many people fail to see, it is the destruction of our rain forests and other forests.

All of the forests across the world are important to us. They house thousands of different types of animals, birds and insects. The forests produce much of the oxygen that humans and animals breath. Without the forest, not only would the only would the animals that live in them go extinct, but so would the human race.

Humans are destroying more and more of the forests everyday. They cut down trees to build homes and buildings and use the to build on. The animals living there don't always get relocated. If they don't find a new place to live on their own, they die.

Humans and animals breath in oxygen and let out carbon dioxide. In turn, trees and plants take in this carbon dioxide and let out oxygen. So, the cycle begins again. Where would we be if all

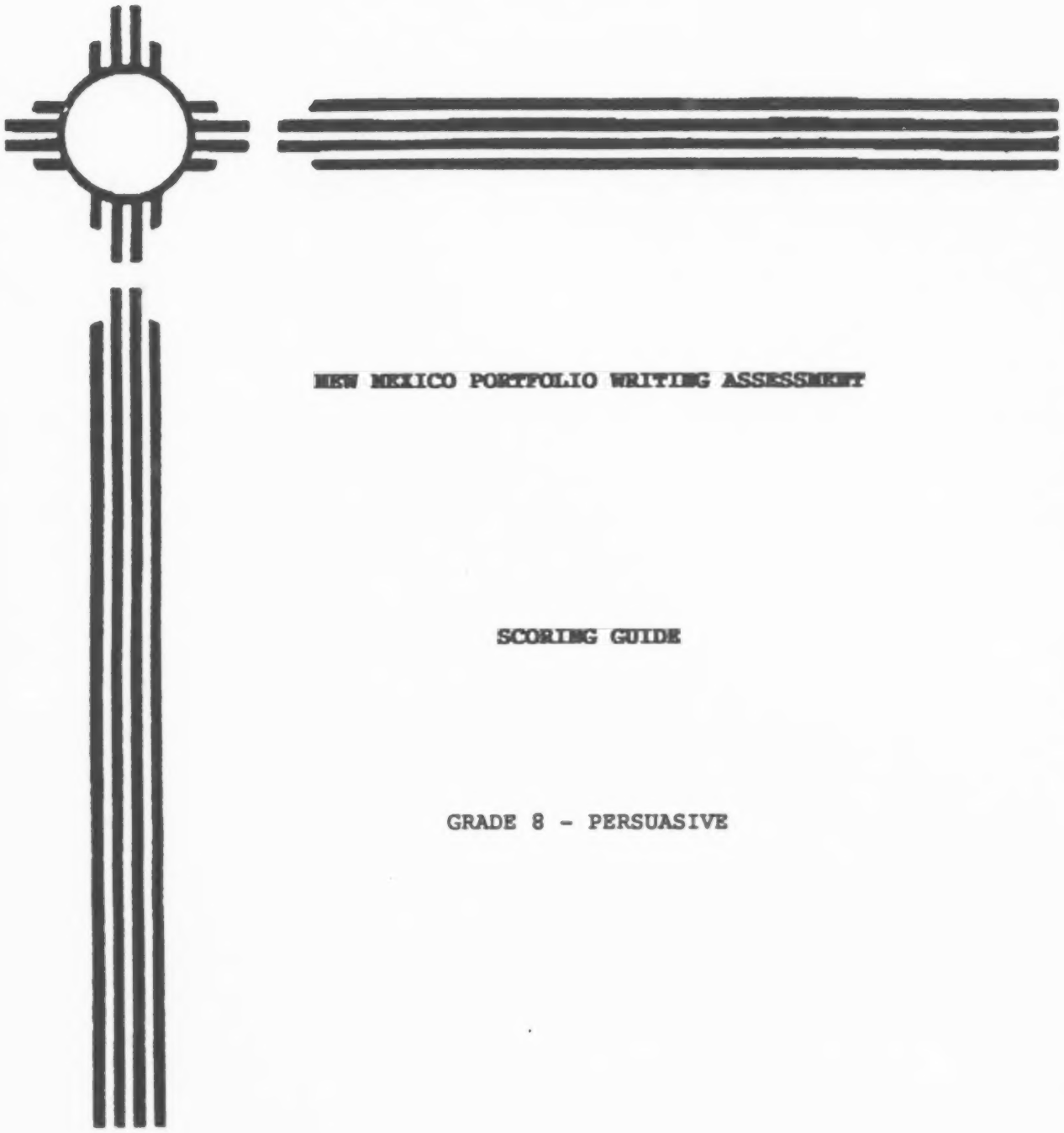
of the forests were destroyed and the only trees left were the ones that are planted to landscape a yard or city? The amount of oxygen in the air would be so low, that eventually we may suffocate altogether.

If we don't stop this destruction now, the harder it will be to regrow the forests later. The sooner we stop, the more of the forest there will be left.

So, as I said before, the earth's environment has many problems. If we stop cutting down the forests, and save the animals that live in them, it will solve one. We'll be on our way to a better environment.

Score Point 6

This response is well-organized, complete, and well-developed throughout. The variety of sentence structure, which adds fluency to the writing, and the successful use of rhetorical questions add to the success of the response.



NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

SCORING GUIDE

GRADE 8 - PERSUASIVE

NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT - PERSUASIVE SCORING RUBRIC

STRONG COMMAND OF PERSUASION	GENERALLY STRONG COMMAND OF PERSUASION	COMMAND OF PERSUASION	PARTIAL COMMAND OF PERSUASION	LIMITED COMMAND OF PERSUASION	INADEQUATE COMMAND OF PERSUASION
SCORE POINT 6	**SCORE POINT 5**	**SCORE POINT 4**	**SCORE POINT 3**	**SCORE POINT 2**	**SCORE POINT 1**
Has an effective opening and closing that ties the piece together	Has an opening and a closing	Generally has an opening and closing	May not have an opening and/or closing	May not have an opening and/or closing	May not have an opening and/or closing
Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and usually has a single focus; some responses may drift from the focus	Some responses relate to the topic but drift or abruptly shift focus	May state a subject or a list of subjects; may have an uncertain focus that must be inferred
Well developed, complete response that is organized and progresses logically; writer takes compositional risks resulting in highly effective, vivid responses	Key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details; some risks may be taken and are mostly successful; may be flawed, but has sense of completeness and unity	Development may be uneven with elaborated ideas interspersed with bare, unelaborated details	Some responses are sparse with clear, specific details but little elaboration; others are longer but ramble and repeat ideas	Details are a mixture of general and specific with little, if any, elaboration, producing a list-like highlight response	Details are general, may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent
	Organized and progresses logically, but there may be a lapse	Some responses are organized with little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea; other responses may ramble somewhat with clusters of ideas that may be loosely connected, but an overall progression is apparent	Some responses have elaborated details but are interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by lack of transitions	Attempt at organization; some attempt to control details but few, if any, transitions	Some lengthier papers are disorganized and difficult to follow; may show no sense of planning
Very few, if any, errors in usage	Few errors in usage	Some errors in usage, no consistent pattern	May display a pattern of errors in usage	May display numerous errors in usage	May have severe problems with usage including tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, word choice
Variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes demonstrates syntactic and verbal sophistication; very few, if any, errors in sentence construction	Syntactic and verbal sophistication through a variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes	May demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax; avoids excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may contain a few errors in sentence construction	May demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may display errors in sentence construction	Excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may contain numerous errors in sentence construction	May contain an assortment of grammatically incorrect sentences; may be incoherent or unintelligible
Very few, if any, errors in mechanics	Few errors in mechanics	May display some errors in mechanics but no consistent pattern	May display a pattern of errors in mechanics NOTE: Errors may interfere with readability	May display numerous serious errors in mechanics NOTE: Errors may interfere somewhat with comprehension	May display severe errors in mechanics. NOTE: Errors may interfere with comprehension.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

This is the prompt 8th Grade students used when writing the following papers. It may be used for practice with your students.

> Your teacher has asked you to write a letter to the President of the United States telling him about <u>one</u> change that you think would make this country a better place. Be sure to tell what the change is and give convincing reasons why the President should make the change.

1 = The response indicates an inadequate command of persuasion.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. These papers are on topic and demonstrate at least a minimal attempt to respond to the topic by stating a subject or giving a list of subjects. Details are vague and/or general. They may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent. Some of the lengthier papers are disorganized, making them consistently difficult to follow. Others will relate to the topic but will have an uncertain focus. In these papers the reader has to infer what the focus is. The overriding characteristic of many of these papers is a lack of control with no sense of planning.

- may have severe problems with usage. This includes problems in tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, and word choice.

- may demonstrate an assortment of grammatically incorrect sentences. Some statements may be either incoherent or unintelligible.

- may display severe errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere with comprehension.

Mr. President,
I think rich people should be treated as equal as the lower classes. There is still prejudice towards rich people.

When I say rich I mean "Upper Class". We should not be classified as Upper, Middle, or Lower. We should be in a class called human.

I am talking about prejudice. Too much prejudism goes on in this country and it should be stopped. We should not use minority as a word. All men are treated equal.

Sincerely,

Score Point: 1

This response shows an inadequate command of persuasive writing. The writer presents no details to support his position (rich people should be treated as equal). There is no sense of planning or of an organizational strategy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Dear Mr. Presedent,

I am writing to you on this day of March 10, 1992, about an ever changing problem in our society. If you havn't noticed by now, the earth has been warming up. Now most people arn't aware of this problem called Global Warning, but I have, and I was wondering if you could send me info on it.

First of all I was wondering if I could get any information on how to stop it. I know of a few ways to help stop it, but I was wondering if there were more was than the ones most people have herd of. If so I would apperacte a list of them. Second off, if everybody is so worried about this problem, why do they keep making the problem worse with those Hairspray? And what are we going to do when all of the glaciers meet?

I thank you for your time, and I would appreciate you writing me back.

Score Point: 1

This response shows an inadequate command of persuasive writing. It merely asks for information on the subject (global warming). There is no attempt to persuade.

President George Bush
1000 - Pennsylvania Ave,
Washington, D.C. 10950

Dear President Bush,

My name is Ryan ___, I'm fourteen and in the eight grade. I lived in Santafe for one year. I go to school at ___. My hobbies are simple. I think schoo is okay at times.

I'm writing to you for a reason. I think the educational system is falling apart a little a year. New Mexico is one of the worst states in the U.S. . Their are teachers, but they are doing something. They are trying new way and it works. Still kids are not learning.

I see kids all around me that write down their assign ments, and say they will get out of the way. They always wait to the last minute. Sometimes I wait to the last minute to. Your side is filled with facts and you know of good reasons to do what you do. Whats the same,

these, is that they are both used to help educate us. Whats different about these two, is that one is working and the other is just sitting there.

A couple of ways to solve this problem might be that we should use some new ways. This has probably been tried but here goes nothing. Instead of doing math out of a book, have them get in groups, make a company. Then let them balance money. pay taxes on their company. Then let try another idea, they pick a couple stock watch and see how they do and compore with other groups. Taking time, maybe a three week period of time to let them get more involved. Instead of due friday

Thank you for reading this letter, I hope this has given you some new ideas on what to think about what you could do in a teachers workshop.

Score Point 1

This response exhibits an inadequate command of persuasion. The writer states a subject (the educational system), but the details that follow are vague (falling apart), or confusing (your side is filled with facts). Also, the solutions offered in the fourth paragraph (have them get in groups; get more involved) do not add to the argument concerning why the change needs to be made.

2 = The response indicates a limited command of persuasion.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. There is a mixture of general and specific details. They are presented with little, if any, elaboration, producing a list-like response--highlight papers. These responses will exhibit an attempt at organization. In other words, there will be some evidence the writer attempted to control the details. The responses relate to the topic, but in some papers, the writer drifts away from the primary focus or abruptly shifts focus. In other papers, there is a single focus, but there are few, if any, transitions making it difficult to move from idea to idea.

- may display numerous errors in usage.

- may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be numerous errors in sentence construction.

- may display numerous serious errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere somewhat with comprehension.

Dear President Bush,

I am writting you this letter to you about a major problem that needs to be changed. This is to stop selling are of cars, stay a phone chemical gases and stop selling cigerettes which causes smoke.

Why I say stop all the sellings of all the stuff about us because of our ozone layer us almost gone. We've done so much damage to it in the past years. People say they will stop doing all these things I have mentioned but its just a bunch of balonge. I think you stop selling all the stuff I've listed for else find away that it won't hurt the ozone layer because we are running out of time and soon we will all die

Before we die we will get a dread-ful disease which would be cancer. Cancer can go to

many parts of the body and effect it in a deadly way. Therefore this disease will make us all ill and then a few will die and then another few till we are all dead.

Another effect of the ozone layer will be our world will be destroyed because everyone will be gone. So I sugest you think of something now because like I said before we are running out of time and before you know it boom and we are gone.

I guess the main reason im writting to you is because i'm a concerned person who is worried about the world. And your the only one who could change it. I just hope in the future something will have been done.

Score Point 2

This response presents a mixture of general and specific details. Some of the ideas are elaborated, but the elaboration is repetitious (soon we will all die, a few will die till we are all dead, before you know it boom and we are gone). There is an overall organizational plan, but more control is needed for a higher score.

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Dear, Mr. Bush

As far back as 1988 when you were running for President I could have cared less. You were just another face. Now that I know you have the power to change our country. I hope you will take into deep consideration what I say.

If there is one bad thing about this country on plauge. That plauge is poverty and homelessness. I know you and your staff have addresed these issues but still they remain as deadly as ever. I know as well as you do that you are trying very hard to eliminate poverty but more remains. If the only way to cure this plauge is to raise taxes I know my family would gladly pay a higher tax if they knew these issues could be stopped.

I know I'm not an adult and I don't write of pay taxes. and you probally wont even get this letter. But please listen to me listen to your heart and put an end to the misery. Please your this country only hope.

Score Point: 2

While this response presents few details to support the writer's change (poverty and homelessness), the overall persuasive tone demonstrates a limited command of the persuasive task.

Dear Mr. President,

There are many changes that need to be made in the way you run the country. our country has many problems such as poverty, crime, and the economy espesially.

I feel that the most important change that has to be made right now is the use of nuclear power. We must start to use nuclear power right away. Using more nuclear power now will save more money to use for other things. It will cut down on pollution a lot. It will save gas for use in the future. Plus nuclear eiterqy lasts longer than gas. To sum it up nuclear energy costs less, lasts longer, and causes less pollution than gas.

These are the reasons that we should use nuclear energy. I hope I have persuaded you to do something good for the country.

Score Point 2

The writer of this brief response presents a list of reasons in support of the change (using more nuclear power). Although the response is organized and controlled, some elaboration is needed for a higher score.

3 = The response indicates a partial command of persuasion.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. The responses relate to the topic and usually have a single focus. Some of these papers may drift from the focus. Some "3" papers are sparse--they have several clear, specific details with a little elaboration, and they are organized and controlled. Occasionally, a paper will ramble somewhat, repeating ideas or adding an idea for no clear reason, resulting in a lengthy response that otherwise would be sparse. Other "3" papers have elaborated ideas and details, but the writing sample is interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by a lack of transition between ideas or between clusters of ideas.

- may display a pattern of errors in usage.

- may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be errors in sentence construction.

- may display a pattern of errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere with readability.

President George Bush
1000 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, DC 10450

Dear Mr. Bush,

Where are our priorities? The message our government is giving us is that weapons are more important than education. To buy books and supplies schools are the ones holding the bake sales. Can you imagine the military holding a bake sale to buy a new stealth bomber?

Teachers' pay is also too low. The task they perform is difficult, yet important They are molding the children of our countries' future. I forsee that we will have a shortage of teachers on our hands if we don't act now. Less people will be entering the field of educating - and why should they? Many less important jobs generate a bigger income.

More of the taxpayers' money should go to education, and less should go

to military spending. We, as a country, need to think of more than just the present or near-future. Education is the foundation of our countries future for many years to come. Without it we have no future. Without it we will not succeed.

A concerned citizen,

Score Point: 3

The writer has an effective opening with the use of rhetorical questions, and the overall progression is apparent. However, there is only one elaborated reason (teachers' pay is too low). This lack of development prevents the response from receiving a higher score.

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President George Bush
1000 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, D. C. 10950

Dear President Bush,

I think that our government doesn't pay enough attention to the education of the young people of our country. Students are dropping out of school when they are 14 years old! I feel that this is due to the lack of funding. The students are getting bored using run down equipment. The teachers are also suffering.

There are a couple ways that we, as a nation, could solve the education problem. One way is to cut millitary funding. We could stop the production of nuclear weapons. Another way that we could help solve the education problem is to stop helping other countries, and start helping our own country. While we are spending money to help other countries that we in need, our own education system is begining to crumble.

We should help our education system for a number of reasons. One reason is that the generation that is going through school today, will be running the country tomorrow. Our generation will also have to solve the problems of the world. Without a good education we will not be able to do either of these things.

As you can see, the education system of the United States is in need of funding Without this funding, our education system will fall apart. We, as students, need more materials to get the education that we need. Without this funding the United States will be run by people that don't even finish high school. The education system needs the government's support if we, as students, are going to get the best education that could be given to us. I, and the rest of the education system would greatly appretiate it if you would consider the issue of funding for the education system of the United States.

Score Point 3

Although this response has specific details (dropping out, lack of funding, rundown equipment), there is little elaboration. The organization is also weak because the writer rambles and repeats ideas. The second paragraph offers a solution to the problem which does not enhance the argument concerning why the change needs to be made.

Mr. President,

If I could change one thing about this world I would have more places to go for the kids. I would make more teen centers where only kids from the ages of 12-21 could get. I would like the centers to be run by kids and no adults aloud. We are begining some projects like this but not enough.

This would be good because kids would enjoy it. Most kids are tierd of getting kicked out of places. They want somewhere where they can go and be themselves and they don't have to worry about adults. If there have to be adults at the teen center kids would appreciate it if the adult was between the ages of 21-30 and

they could relate to the kids. Somebody who is laid back and not like our parents. After all the majority of the kids will be going to the teen center to have fun and get away from thier parents.

This would be a great thing for our genaration. After all if we grow up in a life of violence think of how or what we will do to the earth. The teen center would get kids of the streets and maybe it would even save the world.

Score Point: 3

This response states a change (more teen centers). There is some elaboration supporting the reasons. The discussion of what kind of adult should be allowed, if adults are required, works as support of the idea that the majority of the kids are going to have fun and get away from their parents. More development is needed for a higher score.

Dear President:

I am writing you concerning The future of our country. It has come to My attenion that we spend Trillions of Dollars on Defense, even in peace time, which could be used for more helpful purposes.

I propose that instead of spending this colossal amount of money on Defense we could make more useful things for our country. If we cut it by half we could use this money to build this countries future.

This would allow us to spend more money where it is badly needed. This includes schools, public facilities, science and other projects that will improve our society and with more money put into our schools we will be able to provide a better education. With this money being put into our schools we can provide a good atmosphere where children want to learn. We need to do this because we need our Kids to be able to compete in the high-teck world which grows more every year.

If we put more money into

4 = The response indicates a command of persuasion.

Writing samples in this category:

- generally will have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic. They have a single focus and are organized. There is little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea. Ideas may ramble somewhat and clusters of ideas may be loosely connected; however, an overall progression is apparent. In some papers, development is uneven, consisting of elaborated ideas interspersed with bare unelaborated details.

- may display some errors in usage, but no consistent pattern is apparent.

- may demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax. They avoid excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be few errors in sentence construction.

- may display some errors in mechanics, but these errors will not constitute a consistent pattern.

Our publics facilities we can provide a more enjoyable place to live. By providing much needed services to people we can keep our nation working. These services many help keep our kids in control and prepare them for the next century.

If we pump more money in to scientific research we can produce safe clean products to power the future. We need to Do this to save us from an environmental catastrophy. If we work on photo cells and sinthetic fuels we may be able to help this not happen.

From my view by putting more money back in to our nation we can make it a better place to live.

Sincerly,

Score Point 4

This response exhibits a command of persuasive writing. The response has an effective opening, a strong organizational structure, and elaboration of key ideas (schools, public facilities, science). However, the elaboration is too general (a good atmosphere, an enjoyable place to live, safe clean products) to make this response eligible for a higher score.

President George Bush
1000 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, D.C. 10950

Dear President Bush,

Salutations and greetings. This is an election year, as I'm sure you know. Having said that, I'm fairly certain you will join us again next year (not saying I'm happy about it just saying you will) This will probably be because of a lack of choice. However, if you really want to do the American public a favor you will listen to what I have to say.

In my mind, the worst thing facing the U.S. is the economic situation, which hurts us all. The rich, the poor, the minorities - just plain everyone. That's why it's so urgent.

But why are we in a recession? My guess is because of wasteful spending and Reaganomics. Think about it. During Reagan's tenure, the homeless rate tripled, there were more minorities on welfare than ever before, and the defense budget skyrocketed. Then there was the Savings and Loan scandal! In my opinion, the recession is a result of the ramifications of the 80's and lack of action

on yours and congress's part in the 90's.
This must stop! It's time for everybody to be able to have a piece of the pie, not just the rich! Equality must be perpetuated, and the old establishment must be revised. There must be elimination of all extremes of wealth and poverty!

Sincerely,

Score Point: 4

This response exhibits a command of persuasive writing. The focus is consistent and organized with effective word choice. However, the development is uneven, consisting of specific elaborated ideas (Reaganomics) with bare unelaborated details (equality must be perpetuated).

Dear Mr. Presedent

The Unided States of America is a wonderful place to live. There are many great aspects about living here but there could could be some changes. One of these changes is to not create so many weapons.

It was said in Time magazine that all of the money the U.S. has spent on defence would be enough to rebuild everything in America, from highways to entire cities. This fact to me is increadable to think about. I ask myself why we spend trillions of dollars a year on defence when there are people living in the streets.

If the government used taxpayers money towards more helpfull things, like food for the homeless, or technonology for aids America would not only be a better place, but even more trusted by other countries. We could also use the money for a countless number of improvements in the U.S.. For example new technonologys for finding the ozone, treatments for cancer, and better way to cut down against drugs and crime.

I understand that weapons and defense are needed to some extent, but I and many other americains believe that most →

are not needed. If we do have a war we can stay nutral instead of wasting more money only to kill people. We don't always have to be the hero like we were in the Gulf War.

I believe that America would be a much better place if we spent more money on the publics needs instead of your weapon collection. I hope you have taken what I have said into consideration because it is a serious issue that must at least be considered.

Score Point 4

This response is organized, fluent, and persuasive, but lacks development needed for a higher score. Elaboration in the third paragraph is merely a specific list of "helpful" things on which the money for weapons would be better spent.

5 = The response indicates a generally strong command of persuasion.

Writing samples in this category:

- have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are organized and progress logically; however, there may be a lapse. The key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details. Some writers take compositional risks and are, for the most part, successful. Although these papers are flawed, they have a sense of completeness and unity.
- have few errors in usage.
- demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There are few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- have few errors in mechanics.

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr President:

There are many issues troubling our society today. One of these is Euthanasia. People make the decision to deliver a new life into the world. In the same respect I feel it is their decision to let life pass onto the next.

many aspects of a comatose life should be taken for consideration. With a practicaley minimum chance for survival and importanly a small chance for a normal life, that is life without pain and alterations.

many of these victims are brain dead. If they were to survive they would live, But not as before their accident. They might Only be able to control their functions partially. They would not have a complete life what kind of life would that be to live the rest on machines.

The decision to keep the comatose or

braindead patients alive should be made by someone who understands the feelings or wishes of the dying person. This could be brought forth in a living will. If the person had no time to make the decision or they were too young, then it should be the guardians decision.

Today noone wants to think about this subject. Why think of death when you are alive? Yet, the past, present and future have forced us to think about or make this precious decision. whether or not to pursue a life. I feel noone has the right to make the decision except the victim and their family. They could understand the feelings of the person and thats what really matters!

Score Point 5

This writer exhibits a generally strong command of persuasive writing. Although the ideas are somewhat general (control their functions partially, someone who understands the feelings and wishes), they are evenly elaborated and persuasive. More development and/or more specificity would make this response eligible for a higher score.

Dear President Bush:

Life is sometimes fair, and sometimes it's not. One thing that is not fair is the lousy pay teachers recieve.

Both of my parents happen to be teachers. My family has a decent sum of money, but each year it seems as if we are recieving less money than the year before. Prices on things get higher as time passes, but the pay given to my parents stay the same. My parents each have two jobs, which brings in extra money, but it isn't fair since teaching is such a tiering job itself..

A lot of people dont realize how important teachers are to society. Hardly anybody realizes what it takes to get up in front of 30 nonintrested students and get their motivation going. Teachers work overtime to grade papers, make lesson plans, and average out grades. Almost every night my mom has to sit down and grade papers for 150 students. I know she does it because she cares about the students' education. Obviously most teachers teach because they care. Not only do they lack money, but also the respect from society.

Teaching is an underlooked occupation. I don't believe that there is any job more important, except maybe a doctor. Who do you think taught me the skills I am using now? If one can read this letter, who taught them how? Teachers did. I conclude that something should be done about the low pay of teachers. They work so hard and get so little. Teachers desearve more.

Respectfully yours,

Score Point 5

This writer succeeds in appealing to the emotional side of the audience by using personal details to enhance the argument. The response is evenly elaborated with specific details (parents each have two jobs, grade papers for 150 students) and is well-organized. More development is needed for a higher score.

Dear President Bush,

This country is not perfect as you may well know. Yet it seems your re-election campaign is focussing on the good things about this country and not what it needs. I know this is wrong in many ways, but in general this is the way it seems. I think you need to focus on what can be done to solve this country's problems. This takes money. Where is this money going to come from? The answer, from the defense budget.

What do we need so much defense for? The cold war is over. We don't have to fear a Russian attack now that the Soviet Union has crumbled. At this point we are basically the biggest, and possibly only, super-power in the world. I'm not saying cut all defense, but cut the spending way down. It's just not necessary, and other things are.

If the cutbacks are made, the extra money could do so much. The homeless and unemployed could be helped. More research on the cure and prevention of AIDS could be done. Pollution in the country could be cleaned up. Endangered species could be saved. There is

a vast amount of money in defense spending and it could do a huge amount, if used wisely.

I know one of the key arguments against the cutbacks, is that many men in the military will become unemployed. Well, some of the money could be used for cheap retraining.

I urge you to cutback defense spending and use the money for the good of the country.

Sincerely,

Score Point 5

This writer exhibits a generally strong command of persuasion through effective use of rhetorical questions and refutation (I'm not saying cut all defense; I know one of the key arguments against cutbacks). Although the response is fluent and well-organized, more development of key ideas is necessary for a higher score.

6 = The response indicates a strong command of persuasion.

Writing samples in this category:

- have an effective opening and a closing that ties the piece together. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are well-developed, complete compositions that are organized and progress logically from beginning to end. Many of these writers take compositional risks resulting in highly effective, vivid responses.
- have very few, if any, errors in usage.
- demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There will be very few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- have very few, if any, errors in mechanics.

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C., 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Today's school systems are outdated and ineffective. The systems that most schools are using are relics of the past and that makes them inefficient in a complex modern society such as ours.

Our country has always been a liberator of the oppressed. But then United States have yet to liberate the American youth from academic oppression. There is a lack of freedom in the classrooms of America that cramps the mind and limits thought. The school-going populace hungers for this freedom of expression. The need for more liberal classes such as contemporary literature or philosophy is evident in secondary schools across this nation.

Our nation lacks a widespread system of specialized schools. Schools that reward the student's talents as the top priority should replace our present system. A system that

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allows Ed's students to focus on their own individual goal rather than a general goal thrust upon everyone that walks through the school door will be a prerequisite for success in the twenty-first Century.

To summarize my objections to the present school systems, I feel a drastic change is in order for us to rescue a nation drowning in ignorance. Liberal classes and specialized schools are concepts of the future we can't afford not too grasp. These are issues you, the Education President, cannot ignore any longer.

Sincerely,

Score Point: 6

This reponse, though brief, is controlled and organized. The writer's clever choice of words (liberate the American youth from academic oppression, a prerequisite for success in the twenty-first century, rescue a nation drowning in ignorance) demonstrates a strong command of persuasive writing.

Dear Mr President,

I am a very concerned citizen in Santa Fe, New Mexico. I am writing to you with a certain idea in mind. I strongly believe that that America needs some censorship in music today. Censorship could be exactly what we need, to clean up crime, and other parts of our wretched society.

The music today is definitely out of hand. Lots of rap music that has sexual overtones or talk about the use of drugs or alcohol can be damaging to young children. Music is a huge influence in society today. It is especially influential among children. The music that I am speaking of is 2 Live Crew. Since the release of their first album last year, our crime rate has gone up. Our rape rate in America has gone up even more.

This music describes, in explicit detail, sexual acts, brutalization of women, and oral sex acts. Children are having ideas bounced around in their heads, and are being influenced into making decisions that they are not yet mature enough to make. For these reasons I think that Obscene material should be controlled My suggestion is the banning of sales of this obscene material.

This would allow adults to listen to this music after the age of 18. Then smaller, younger more vunerable children, would not be influenced by this material that some call music.

I hope you will consider my suggestion for Censorship. We aren't just talking music that influences young people, but the moral decay of society. I believe that censorship is one important step in cleaning up society. I truly hope you consider my arguement for censorship.

Sincerely,

Score Point 6

This vivid response is controlled, organized, and evenly developed. Effective word choice (wretched society, brutalization, vulnerable children) adds fluency to the response. The writer shows a strong command of persuasive writing.

Dear Mr. President:

I think the thing that, if changed, would most impove our nation would be education. This means changes in schools as well as in the home if it will truly be effective.

First, the attitude toward education in poor and uneducated communities must change. I know that in my community there are many intelligent children who choose not to do well in or put effort into school because their families do not encourage them or give them reason to think that a good education is valuable. It is sad to see a perfectly good mind wasted for lack of use.

Second, courses should not be taught toward the mediocre. We should challenge all students because they will rise to the level of expectation. If a student is only expected to be average that is all they will achieve, but if we make each and every child feel that they can and should achieve higher goals, they will. A teacher who makes their class less challenging in hopes of more students passing and making them look better, is only cheating the students who actually care about their education.

Third, I say that teachers should not be baby sitters. If a person cares so little about their education that they cannot follow the rules and do their work, they should not be in school. These students are not only hurting themselves but are taking away from those who actually care. Instead of forcing kids into staying in school, we

should let the serious ones stay and let the rest do the dirty jobs. All of this struggle could be avoided if society instilled a higher value for education in young people.

Fourthly, in the year 2000 plan for education, music and art are not mentioned once. It will be a sad, sad day when all of us are math wizards and nuclear physisists but cannot recall hearing of Shakespeare or Beethoven. What is the point of life if you can't enjoy it.

If we are to continue being a great country and a leader of nations, things must change.

Sincerely,

Score Point 6

This response exhibits a strong command of persuasive writing. The writer's ideas are specific, well-developed, and thought-provoking (what is the point of life if you can't enjoy it). The response is complete and unified with a strong persuasive tone throughout.

NOTES

NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

SCORING GUIDE

GRADE 8 - ANALYTICS

ANALYTIC SCORING GUIDELINES

SENTENCE FORMATION

3. All sentences are complete and often varied in length and structure. The paper reads smoothly from sentence to sentence. There are few run-ons or fragments.

2. There is basically good sentence structure with occasional awkward or confusing constructions. There may be several run-ons or fragments.

1. There are many problems with sentence structure. Simple sentence patterns are used. Sentences are short, somewhat childlike and repetitious. Run-ons and fragments are common.

MECHANICS

3. Punctuation and capitalization are consistently appropriate for grade level. There are few or no spelling errors in words appropriate to grade level.

2. Use of punctuation and capitalization is adequate but will contain certain errors. Several spelling mistakes may be present, or the same mistake may be repeated.

1. Capitalization is erratic and basic punctuation is omitted or haphazard. There are too many errors in mechanics which interfere with communication.

WORD USAGE

3. Vocabulary is carefully and imaginatively used. There are few or no problems with subject-verb agreement, correct forms of verbs, selection of pronouns, possessives, etc.

2. Vocabulary is acceptable in scope and appropriateness. Some difficulties with agreement, verbs, pronouns, possessives, etc., may be manifest.

1. Vocabulary is quite limited; the essay evidences too many errors in agreement, verb forms, pronoun choice, possessives, etc., which interfere with communication.

DEVELOPMENT

3. Response is clearly elaborated, well organized, detailed enough to enhance clarity, follows from a main idea to a logical conclusion.

2. Details are clear and specific, but they may be unevenly elaborated or poorly organized.

1. Few details are included in a very brief response. If present, details are vague and sketchy.

Your teacher has asked you to write a letter to the President of the U.S. telling him about one change that you think would make this country a better place. Be sure to tell what the change is and give convincing reasons why the President should make the change.

Dear Mr. Bush,

Our teacher has asked us to write this letter. The students have been asked to write about smothing (one thang) in this letter on how we could make this country a better place.

I think in a town that has many skaters & rollerbladers there should be a place to skate because every were in Santa Fe New Mexico because there is no place to rollerblade and all of the places were you could have a fun time they kick you off because they don't like it.

If there was a skate-park then people who wanted to skate could. But you would not hafto pay to get in but there could be concession stands for food, drinks, and even a skate shop, and they could rent out pads so people wouldent get hurt if when he/she fell.

If we had a place like this then people would have a place to skate and have fun, and then people wouldnt skate where they couldnt and then every one would be happy.

Thank you for taking your time in reading this letter I hope you liked it and I hope you liked my idea for a skate-park. I hope you could do smothing about it.

SENTENCE FORMATION: 1
Simplistic sentence patterns exist along with awkward syntax.

MECHANICS: 1
Basic punctuation is missing (Our teacher Paul Koops, and Santa Fe New Mexico). Contractions are not correctly punctuated, and common words are frequently misspelled.

WORD USAGE: 1
Vocabulary is limited and repetitious. Very few specific words appear in this response.

DEVELOPMENT: 1
Due to repetition of ideas, this response does not move beyond a "1" in development.

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Dear Mr. President,

Please help the homeless. It is not there fault for being homeless. Help them find a good home to live in and food to eat and if you can find them a good job so they can make money to live on and to by there homes so they wont have to live in the street. If no one helps then they will never help thereself and never get a house to live in and give them food so they wont eat out of garbig can, and good job so they can by there cars or house or food. (PLEASE HELP!!)

Mr. President it not fair for you to make fun of the homeless because if you were homeless you want like to be made fun of because there like you you and me so lets help the homeless. If you gave them food they will like you even more, and if you fond them good job they will probley vote for you and you have more tax payers so help the homeless and they will help you and they wont have to still or kill for there foods or a place to live. Mr. President help them so you can get elective. You are a good president but the homeless will help you if you help them. So good luck helping the homeless

SENTENCE FORMATION = 1
Simplistic sentence patterns exist along with awkward syntax.

MECHANICS = 2
Punctuation and capitalization are adequate, but there are some errors in spelling.

WORD USAGE = 2
Vocabulary is acceptable in scope and appropriateness, but there is some difficulty with pronouns (thereself) and tense (can get elective).

DEVELOPMENT = 1
Due to repetition of ideas, this response does not move beyond a "1" in development.

Nuclear Weapons

I think nuclear weapons should be bannded from the U.S. and all of the other places in the world. I think the President should make an agreement with our enemies and our allies. One of the reasons is because of the radiation of a bomb.

The second reason is the pollution. Third It's to destructive. Radiation is one of the reasons why the President should bannd nuclear weapons. Radiation is one of the most poisinis kind of gas. When they make the bomb there's always a posablity the bomb could leak radiation. The people making the bomb could either get canser, or some other sickness.

Radiation is dangrerous enough to kill if there's enough of it. Secined is the sting pollution. We have enough pollution from cars and factories. If we were in war with another country, and we bombed them with a atomic bomb. It would hurt us as much as them because of the ozone layer. Third and final reason is it's to distructive to our environment and the people.

A atomic bomb is so distructive it could kill 1/3 of the state. It would make animals die, and more diesises to wory about that's the reasen nuclear weapons should be bannd.

SENTENCE FORMATION = 2
The response has basically good sentence structure with one run-on, one fragment, and occasional awkward constructions.

MECHANICS = 2
Punctuation, capitalization, and spelling are adequate, but there are some errors.

WORD USAGE = 2
Vocabulary is acceptable in scope and appropriateness, though there are some difficulties with tense (President should banned) and article choice (a atomic bomb).

DEVELOPMENT = 1
Due to repetition of ideas, this response does not move beyond a "1" in development.

Mr. President, Saving the Humpback Whales is an important thing to do. They are going extinct. Theyre the biggest animal next to to the Blue Whale in the ocean. Theyre also a beautiful sight to look at.

I would like to talk about saving the Humpback Whale. There is only four to five hundred of them left. If we don't help them soon they will all go extinct!

They are one of the biggest animals in the ocean. Theyre over one hundred feet long. They live in the Atantic, and Pacific Ocean. Their fins are half the size of their bodies. Their bodies are being used for soap, margarine, dressing leather, and lubricant.

They are one of the most beautiful things people have ever seen. If you're ever lived somewhere on the coast you will see them at night fall doing flips out of the water.

I think saving the Humpback Whale would be very important thing to do. They will all go extinct if we don't help them soon!

SENTENCE FORMATION = 2
The response has basically good sentence structure with one awkward construction.

MECHANICS = 2
Punctuation, capitalization, and spelling are adequate, but there are a few errors.

WORD USAGE =2
Vocabulary is acceptable but not imaginative, and there are a few errors in agreement (There is only four to five hundred, They are one of the biggest animals) and one word omission.

DEVELOPMENT = 2
Details are clear but not elaborated.

Mr. President, the people of our state want to support the fight against drugs coming from foreighn countres. Our state would like to stop drug dealers from selling it to kids in the U. S. to stop at least a quater of the crimes that happen in the U. S. The schools of America are full of drug dealers or drug users. One-fourth of every student in the U. S. do drugs or is a drug dealer. The crimes that drugs make the kids of the U. S. do is bad enough. Just thinking of the next couple of years the persentage of drug abuse will be higher at least 25 percent more.

The drug dealers are more popular is Los Angeles and of coruse New York because of the larger group of people who do drugs in big towns then in little towns. Drug dealers usually give or sell drugs to minors or kids in there 20's. The more specific place where you can find drugs is in the gangs. The drugs that are getting sold faster are cocaine and marijuana.

The kids of America are buying drugs because drug dealers are in schools alot of times. The kids are hooked on drugs or starting drugs when they are at the age of

7 yrs old. Pretty sad to know a kid that young would be on drugs. In the coming up year there will be kids in gangs because of doing drugs and stuff like that.

Drugs are the top 3 things in our nation that make people comite crimes and destroy others. Drugs can make you do burglaries and also Car burglaries. Drugs make you forget about your family and the one's you love. Please support us in the fight against drugs. The more support you give the kids of America the better and the faster drugs will "stop".

SENTENCE FORMATION = 3
Sentences are complete and varied, and for the most part, the response reads smoothly from sentence to sentence.

MECHANICS = 2
Punctuation, capitalization, and spelling are adequate, but there are a few errors.

WORD USAGE = 2
Vocabulary is acceptable in scope and appropriateness but not carefully or imaginatively used.

DEVELOPMENT = 3
This response is organized, elaborated, and detailed to the "3" level. The main idea follows logically from beginning to end.

Dear President Bush,

This country is not perfect as you may well know. Yet, it seems your re-election campaign is focussing on the good things about this country, and not what it needs. I know this is wrong in many ways, but in general, this is the way it seems. I think you need to focus on what can be done to solve this country's problems. This takes money. Where is this money going to come from? The answer, from the defense budget.

What do we need so much defense for? The cold war is over. We don't have to fear a Russian attack now that the Soviet Union has crumbled. At this point we are basically the biggest, and possibly only super-power in the world. I'm not saying cut all defense, but cut the spending way down. It is just not necessary, and other things are.

If the cutbacks are made, the extra money could do so much. The homeless and unemployed could be helped. More research on the cure and prevention of A.I.D.S. could be done. Pollution in the country could be cleaned up. Endangered species could be saved. There is

a vast amount of money in defense spending and it could do a huge amount, if used wisely.

I know one of the key arguments against the cutbacks, is that many men in the military will become unemployed. Well, some of the money could be used for cheap retraining.

I urge you to cutback defense spending and use the money for the good of the country.

SENTENCE FORMATION: 3
Sentences are complete and varied in length and structure. The response reads fluently from sentence to sentence. The sophisticated approach of using rhetorical questions also helps this paper achieve a "3" in sentence formation.

MECHANICS: 3
Punctuation and capitalization are consistently appropriate for grade level.

WORD USAGE: 3
Vocabulary is varied, specific, and imaginatively used (Soviet Union has crumbled).

DEVELOPMENT: 3
This response is organized, elaborated, and detailed to the "3" level. The main idea follows logically from beginning to end.

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